

DRASTIC SOLUTIONS

#5

INTERVIEWS WITH:

BAD RELIGION

MORAL CRUX (R.I.P.)

HOPEFUL MONSTERS



ARTICLES ON:
BIAFRA'S STEREOTYPING OF ARABS
THE MYTHS OF POVERTY
STRAIGHT EDGE FASCISM

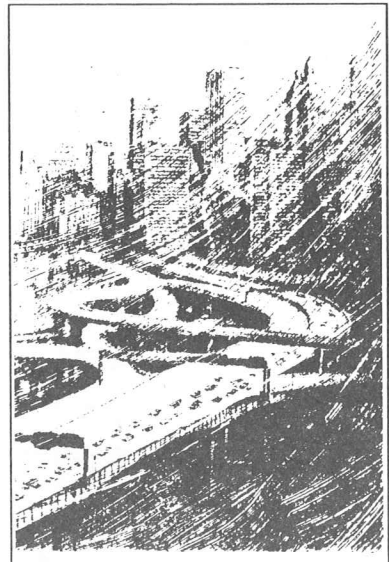
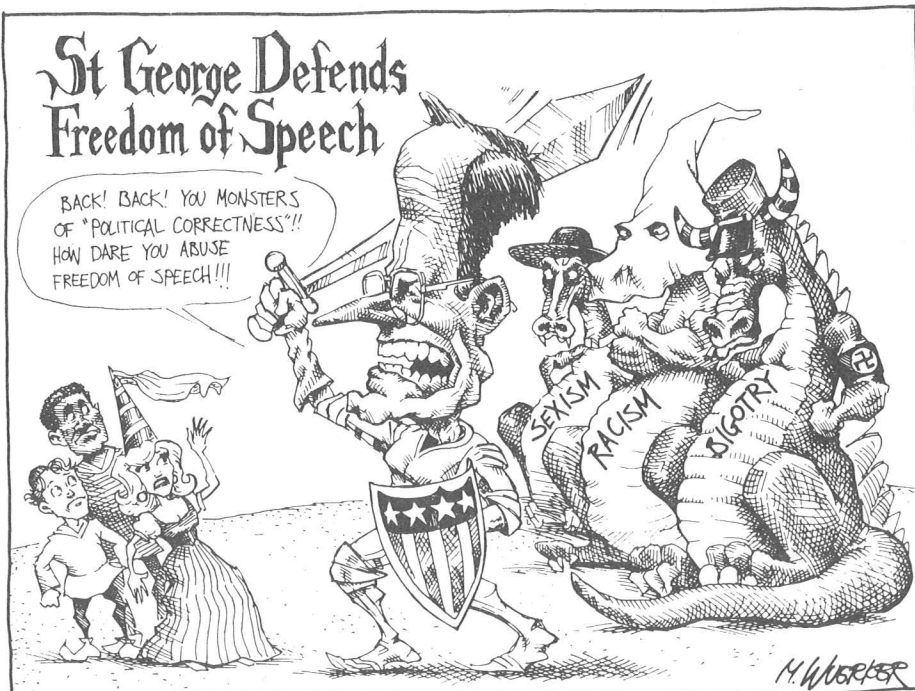
DRASTIC SOLUTIONS

editorial

It's all Paulitics

Hello, and welcome to issue #5.

Let's get down to business. It seems as though I was able to piss off everyone that I wanted to with the last issue. However, the response that I received to my "Final Word" column was somewhat surprising. I was expecting more of a backlash from the article that I wrote on Zionism. On the contrary, most of the responses to that piece were quite positive. As for the "Final Word" column though, for something that was more of an afterthought than anything, it created quite a stir. It is flattering to know that my opinions are so important to some people to be perceived as threatening, but my sole intention in all cases is to get you to think. To those who were angered, insulted or otherwise offended, I can only say that these are my opinions, and that's all there is to it. I have neither the power nor desire to set punk rock standards. I think hardcore should be political. Political hardcore bands turn my crank, okay? If they don't do it for you, who cares?! I'm just sick of so-called punk rock bands sending me demos with misogynistic, racist, and/or homophobic lyrics, claiming to be apolitical. I'm tired of supposedly alternative zines printing articles that reflect mainstream thought and embody many of the above-mentioned "isms". I'm saddened that there is little 'alternative' left to our alternative and that our music has become as watered down as mainstream pop, and just about as threatening. It was out of this frustration that I wrote last issue's "Final Word" column, and I make no apologies for it. But really, can we get on with the more serious issues at hand. Because while you're worrying about what you listen to and how hardcore you are, (or even less importantly, how hardcore I think you are), there are people dying over far more important realities. So...on with the zine.



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Back Issues:

Issue #4: w/ Oi Polloi, Bliss, Fuel,
articles on the Palestinian Struggle,
toxic dumping, the Oka Crisis, the Gulf
war, and poetry.
40 pages, offset - \$3.00 ppd.

Issue #3: w/ Sons of Ishmael,
Malhavoc, Brotherhood, Earth Day
critique, and poetry.
24 pages, offset - \$2.00 ppd.

Next Issue:

"The Smoke Free Issue"
w/ Rorschach, Born Against, and lots
of shit on the tobacco industry.

Cheques payable to Paul Abrash **NOT**
Drastic Solutions

DRASTIC SOLUTIONS
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This photo was stolen from the Associated Press

The photo above is one of the few that slipped through Pentagon censorship. The corporate media failed to clearly document the horrific devastation to both human beings as well as machines.

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Anti-Schism.....Still Life
Born Against.....Nine Patriotic Hymns for Children
Cacofonia/Putrid Scum.....ep
Censurados.....lp
Deprived.....Reject the Illusion...Class War Now
Disorder.....More Noize
Extreme Noise Terror.....Live
G-anx.....Masterpeace
Infest.....2nd ep
Infezione.....Childiti Il Perche
Jesus Chrust/Wurst.....ep
Lootbag.....demo
No Security/Valvontakomissio.....lp
Phallocracy.....Don't Be A Dick demo
Public Enemy.....Apocalypse '91...
Resist.....The Solution...Revolution
Rorschach.....Needlepack
Sofahead.....anything
Sons of Ishmael.....Mimsey of the Borgoves 10"
V/A.....Made in Michigan cassette

STEPHE'S TUNEFUL TWENTY

Ankry Simons.....ep
Artificial Peace.....Outside Looking In (?)
Born Against.....anything
Citizens Arrest.....Colossus
Deep Wound.....ep
Demise.....All of this for Nothing
Double Think.....The Scars of Our Existence...
Downcast.....lp
Econochrist.....Another Victim
Fearless Iranians from Hell.....Foolish Americans
Go!.....Why Suffer ?
Infest.....2nd ep
Infezione.....Childiti Il Perche
Noise Annoys.....My Mummy
Phleg Camp.....Bully My Pushy
Rise Above.....II
Seein' Red.....lp
Statement.....Don't Sacrifice Me
Trusty.....lp
Youth Korps.....'82

LETTERS

This is the first time Drastic Solutions has featured a letters section. It's not that we haven't gotten mail in the past, it's just that it's rarely been critical of the zine. Drastic Solutions welcomes letters of any kind from its readership, and hopefully this section will continue in future issues.

Dear Drastic Solutions,

You asked me my opinions of Drastic Solutions so here it goes: I really enjoyed them, good interviews, good layout and some interesting articles. The zine is obviously very political. I'm not the most political person in the world but the articles were interesting and I learned from them which is cool. The single thing I didn't agree with in issue #4 was in Paul Gets...The Final Word. While I do agree that politics will always be involved in hardcore, but that does not necessarily mean every hardcore band must be political. To be blunt, I don't know much about politics, so according to his article I should a) learn more, or b) be banned from playing in a hardcore band. Also what's wrong with wanting to be a "superior" musician? I mean I'm sure he wants to put out a "superior" fanzine. ie. professional printing not photocopied, and glued together, [glued together??? - ed.] rather, you choose cardboard 2-color covers. I mean you could make it less "superior" and charge less money. But I'm sure you guys take pride in it and you want it to look as good as possible (which it does). So what's wrong with wanting to be proficient on your instruments and put out good music, it sometimes gets hard to listen to "bad" music all the time. Well, that was the only thing I did not like about the fanzine.

Al Spina
West Chester, Pennsylvania

Al,

Thank you very much for writing and offering your comments. Communication is one of the key elements that is lacking in our subculture. I'd like to preface my response by stating that, although you may not consider yourself political, you most certainly are. Politics, simply stated, is decision-making. Whether it's a choice of what you eat, what products you buy or what bands you support, politics are a part of everyday life. Politics does not merely imply a trip to the voting booth. With that out of the way, allow me to respond to some of your questions concerning the zine.

In the "Final Word" column of issue #4, I think that my fault lay in not qualifying my statements to a greater degree. The column was written in haste and out of frustration. That is not to say that I do not stand behind my words, because I do, the problem is simply one of clarification. Prior to writing that column I had just read the umpteenth interview with yet another "joke" hardcore band who, although claiming to be apolitical, made racist and sexist comments throughout. I was beginning to see a pattern developing among these so-called hardcore bands. If a band, or a fanzine for that matter, speaks about the situation in the Middle East, they are labelled political. If some idiot in a joke band, or zine, makes a racist comment like, "those towelheads should be nuked," (and I've read worse than that) it is not recognized as a political statement. Why? The problem is that the new right has used labelling practices and intimidating rhetoric to discredit those attempting to work for change. Broadly speaking, the left has been characterized as being political while the conservative right has not. By using such labels as 'politically correct', 'thought police', etc., politics has been turned into a dirty word and being political has now become the "wrong" thing to be. So my problem is with bands who fear being labelled 'political' and so attempt to disguise the true nature of their thoughts by adopting this "joke hardcore band - we're just here for the beer" attitude. Make no mistake - they are political. They just have to come to the point where they recognize themselves as such. Now I know that my column didn't reflect all of these thoughts, but as I said, it was written in haste. So my column was, in reality, an attack on conservative labelling practices and those bands who have unwittingly become tools of the new right.

As far as the superior musicianship thing goes, there is nothing wrong with becoming proficient at your instrument. The problem lies with the kind of attitude that develops along with the talent. It seems that as people become better musicians, suddenly their old guitar isn't good enough anymore. Then it's on to Marshall stacks. Next, the club they've been playing in isn't big enough for their egos. Five dollar shows quickly become ten dollar shows. Fi-

nally, it takes a major label to market this "superior musicianship". Now, I'm sure that it's possible to become proficient at your instrument without selling out, there are certainly a great number of talented bands on independent labels, it's just that the sell-out happens so often. I just think that there is too much emphasis placed on the music and not enough on the lyrics, or on a commitment to a Do-It-Yourself philosophy. I also believe that this increased level of proficiency in many cases, intimidates would-be musicians from ever getting started. Punk gave me the motivation and opportunity to pick up an instrument without ever having taken a lesson in my life. It was forgiving of my inexperience and provided me with a stage once I was ready. I wonder if the 'scene' will continue to be an outlet for non-musicians to have a voice. Because the message will always be the thing that makes a band punk. Otherwise, as I stated previously in #4, it's just rock'n'roll.

Finally, I'd like to address your comments concerning the aesthetics of the zine. The resources that allow us to present Drastic Solutions in this format do not cost us anything. Stephe is responsible for the layout as he has access to equipment through his job. It may also interest you to know that it costs less to have a fanzine offset printed than it does to have it photocopied. The first two issues of D.S. were photocopied and cost me over two dollars per. That's the same number of pages that we can print now for about seventy-five cents cheaper per zine. The added colour of issues 3 and 4 cost twenty-five dollars per five hundred copies. That works out to a nickle an issue. So as far as your, "you could make it less superior and charge less money" comment goes, you're way off base (unless of course you count that nickle per copy we made you pay for colour). We are interested in putting out a quality fanzine but at the cheapest possible cost to both ourselves, and ultimately, the reader. This current issue is the direct result of that very line of thinking.

I hope I've addressed your questions sufficiently and let me again thank you for taking the time to criticize as well as compliment the zine. I am always open to discussion, so feel free to write back on any of these, or other, issues.

Paul



Poverty Myths

by Mitchell Shore

Most of us fall victim to myths about poverty in our cities. Sure we see the people on the streets as we walk by but, do we really believe that poverty exists? Most cities - most 'world class' cities - are cities that live lies. They hide their problems behind veils of progress. Things like office towers, condominiums, growing suburbs, new developments and so on.

Let's face facts. This is a very misleading picture. Behind all the glamour and privilege are people and places that do not quite

fit into these visions of wealth and prosperity. It is time we stopped walking by with blinded eyes and began looking at the bigger, clearer picture. It is time we began asking why hunger, homelessness, and poverty exist in our cities - in our backyards.

A lot of us only recognize poverty as the media portrays it: Starving, flea-ridden children in developing countries. It becomes very easy for poverty to become distorted under these conditions. The few images we do receive are of people (usually

alcoholics), who due to some unfortunate mistake on their behalf (like a lack of education, or the colour of their skin) has caused them to be where they are. The attitude seems to be: "Well, it is too bad they are in that situation but, at least they are not starving like those Ethiopians." Sure they are not suffering, we are fortunate enough to have food banks and soup kitchens. Afterall, we do give at Thanksgiving and Christmas when our guilt makes us feel charitable. It's just like we put the recyclable goods in the 'blue boxes'. Let someone else deal with the problems.

One thing is for certain - there is a problem. Recent Welfare Canada estimates say that in Toronto alone there are approximately 400,000 people dependent on some form of social assistance. The largest portion being children. The Daily Bread food bank reports that at least 285,000 people are using food banks in Ontario. True enough these numbers are not as large as they are south of the border, but does that really matter? First of all, those numbers do not mean much to people since it is hard to conceive an image of 400,000 people in our heads. Secondly, it does not matter how the the numbers are to constitute a problem. It is a problem - a very real one.

I just want to go back to those food banks for a minute. Although people give when the humanitarian urge feels right, many people believe that users of food banks are lazy free loaders who do not really need them. The truth is that over 70% of people on social assistance use food banks. A growing number of people who work for minimum wage are discovering that they need food banks to simply make ends meet. For most low income people food is the only flexible item on their budgets. Once rent, bills and other necessities are paid off food is the easiest place to cut back.

This illustrates how hunger is a derivative issue. People are hungry because living costs combined with insufficient incomes keep basic needs for survival out of reach. Inadequate social assistance programs as well as our apathetic attitudes sentence people to a seemingly endless cycle of poverty. Though food banks relieve the immediate hunger problem they do not solve it.

The solutions can not be found in charity, but rather in addressing the roots of the problem, housing and income.

Most people with average incomes struggle to live in decent housing. It is virtually impossible to do so with a non-existent income. Urban centres are where housing problems are the most prominent. In these areas housing tends to focus around profit -

not people.

The unemployed, runaways, refugees and immigrants, roomers and boarders, people suffering from psychiatric problems, alcoholics, drug addicts, and victims of violence - are all in situations where the risk of becoming homeless is great. Homelessness is the clearest example of our society's failure to meet the needs of all its members.

The most dramatic result of homelessness are the impacts on health. People are subjected to live in chronically stressful situations where there is a chance of developing any number of ailments including tuberculosis, heart and lung disease, hypothermia and psychiatric disorders.

We must take the initiative and demand that affordable housing be available to everyone and push the government to support new non-profit housing projects. Until then it is important for us to support groups (or start our own) which are addressing the needs of poor and homeless people.

Providing adequate housing is only part of the solution. The need for job opportunities and guaranteed incomes that allow people to survive is desperate. People have to be able to make the transition from programs which tend to trap, dehumanize, and marginalize people. To put it simply we have to help people help themselves. It is shameful that we can allow the current situation to exist. We are fooling ourselves if we believe the need is being met.

At a time when the problems are growing worse than ever before, an unprecedented backlash against the poor is taking place. The 'not in my backyard' syndrome is reaching new heights. To hide the problems we have jails and mental hospitals. Most recently attempts have been made in the States to ban begging, thereby completely taking the problem out of public view. What comes next?

As long as such attempts exist, action to counter them is imperative. Remember, food and shelter are not privileges but rights for all. As long as these problems exist, the responsibility to do something about it is on our shoulders. A revolution of the heart is needed. If you want to fight injustice you have to start where it counts - right in your backyard. A simple suggestion - if you want to undermine the dehumanization of our systems then the most dramatic thing you can do is to treat people with dignity and respect and most importantly like humans.

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The Misuse of Information: Breaking Down the Myths of Arab Culture



The war in the Gulf has now all but disappeared from the nation's tv screens. The ticker-tape of the victory parades has been swept from the streets and car antennas across the continent are finally being relieved of their sun-faded adornments. The military and corporate media's "Showdown In The Gulf" is over. The lasting effect of the media's cheerleading role however, will be felt long after the bodies are buried.

Tens of thousands of Iraqi's died in Amerika's biggest specta-

tor sport of the decade. The dehumynizing campaign that was waged against the Iraqi's and allowed their deaths to reported almost casually, is one that will affect all Arabs for some time to come.

In this climate of fear, hate and misinformation, few progressive voices have been able to rise above the din. A cursory analysis of the recent conflict in Iraq simplified it into a struggle for oil. Thus, the adopted anti-war cry of the left, "No Blood For

Oil", trivialized the real issue of power and played into the hands of the ruling elite. This war was not about oil. It was an attempt, a successful one, by the West to strengthen their stranglehold on the region. It was designed to assure the United States' complete economic and military domination over the Middle East. By turning it into a conflict over oil and reducing it to a slogan, attention was successfully diverted from the more important issue of imperialism, and the debate went up over whether or not we should be killing and dying for oil. This climate produced many works, including **Die For Oil Sucker**, a spoken word 7" by Jello Biafra.

Die For Oil Sucker was, I think, an honest attempt by Biafra to voice his opposition to U.S. imperialist strategies. Unfortunately, due to his ignorance of Arab culture, he has fallen victim to the corporate media stereotype. Biafra certainly goes out on a limb by discussing a culture that he obviously knows little or nothing about, and good intentions aside, such commentary does little more than encourage anti-Arab sentiment and serves only to blur the already distorted Amerikan image of the Middle East.

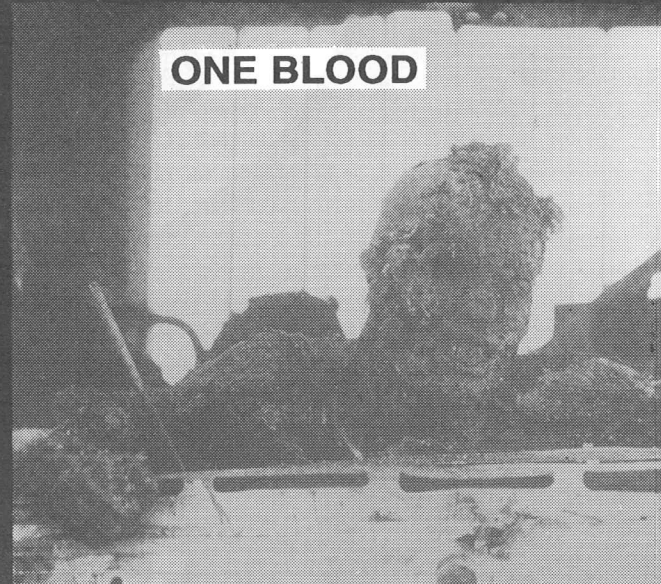
So, in this column, I will attempt to examine and evaluate Biafra's comments and provide a factual alternative to many of his remarks. Racism is often subtle, and it's only through this kind of analysis that cultural stereotypes might be broken down. By the end of this essay I hopefully will have conveyed the danger in abusing a position of authority (in this case, Biafra's role as information-giver) and as well, awakened you to the massive contribution of Arab peoples to humyn history.

The first popular misconception that I came across in Biafra's monologue, was the line, "Give your life for a country where...people still get their hands and heads chopped off." I'll assume that Biafra is referring to Kuwait in this instance. However, his lack of specific reference does allow the interpretation that many countries in the Middle East practice these forms of punishment. With the exception of Saudi Arabia, 'our' ally in this conflict, beheadings have not occurred in Arab nations for hundreds of years. And such executions take place only when shocking and violent crimes are committed. Hardly remarkable when compared to the United States. Arab justice is, for the most part, the same as European justice. There are court proceedings and an attorney represents the accused. The state provides attorneys for the indigent. In some Arab countries, like Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, justice is doled out with a personal touch that exists in no other parts of the world. In these countries, citizens can air their grievances face to face with their rulers at open-door audiences known as majlis. (Jack Shaheen, *The TV Arab*, p. 43)

But let's return to the country that Biafra was referring to. From 1985 to mid-1988 there had been only six executions in Kuwait. Comparatively for the same period, the U.S. had executed sixty-six. And contrary to Biafra's assertions, the method of execution in Kuwait is hanging. (Amnesty International 1990 Report)

If we are to examine comparative state brutality between Kuwait and the United States, we find that in 1989 Kuwait had delivered one death sentence and carried out one execution. The

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Fort Dix, New Jersey, February 27, 1991. Throughout the Gulf War, the corporate media and the Pentagon seemed anxious to co-operate. Here, as Dan Quayle rallies the troops, a nightly-news inspired backdrop emphasizes the exciting, spectator sport atmosphere of war, American-style.

United States on the other hand had executed sixteen and had 2300 prisoners under sentence of death. Moreover, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that juvenile offenders as young as sixteen could be executed as well as the mentally retarded. I could find no cases, in three Amnesty International Reports, of anyone in Kuwait who had either head or hand chopped off. [When The State Kills... (1989), Torture In The Eighties (1984), and Amnesty's Report for 1990]

Next, Biafra states that, **"In Saudi Arabia they stone you to death for sleeping with another person's husband or wife."** I could find no substantiation for this claim, unless one considers Hollywood as a source for factual information.

Jack Shaheen, author of "The TV Arab" a book which examines media stereotyping, has travelled extensively throughout the Middle East looking for evidence of this very popular myth. There, he spoke with many men and wimmin in villages and cities about what happens to a womyn if she commits adultery. The consensus was that divorce generally occurs. Then the families usually try to convince the 'adulterers' to marry. Not quite the graphic picture that Biafra paints for us. Shaheen notes that "few women in Islamic nations are killed for committing adultery, just as few women in western nations get killed over adultery." (TV Arab, p. 50)

Let's continue along those lines and examine Jello's impression of wimmin in the Middle East. **"Wimmin can't go out alone or show their face or even drive."** As for seclusion and the wearing of the veil, Professor Shwika Elwan in "The Status of Women In The Arab World", notes that neither Islam nor pre-Islamic Arabia are responsible for them. Arabs borrowed such customs from Turkish and Persian societies. Only beginning in the 12th Century did wimmin - both Christian and Moslem - begin wearing veils. The veil was a symbol of upper class wimmin, not a sign of inferiority. (TV Arab, p. 45) The reasons for wimmin wearing veils in the Middle East are simple yet varied. Aside from the tradition of wearing the veil as a sign of status, they are worn for reasons of fashion. Veils also practically serve the task of keeping dust and dirt from the face. An important consideration, I think, must be given to those who wear veils as a statement of sexual liberation. Arabic wimmin have observed the treatment and sexual exploitation of their Amerikan counterparts, and the veil keeps them from being looked upon as sex objects. Thus, the veil, far from a shackle of oppression, has served as a symbol of sexual liberation. If Biafra truly wishes to examine the oppression of wimmin, he might be advised to focus upon his own culture first.

Dr. Elwan, in her aforementioned book, writes that, "Islam

has been a liberating force" and has helped advance the status of wimmin. Islam recognized a womyn "as an independent being and gave her what was then, and is still considered to be, a liberal bill of rights and responsibilities. Islam allows a womyn to keep her family name after marriage and grants her the right to own property and dispose of it freely, without the intermediary of a husband or male guardian. Islamic wimmin had these rights, it should be noted, at a time when no female in Europe was allowed to own property of her own." (TV Arab, p. 45)

Today Arab wimmin attend the same colleges and universities as men. Many Middle East nations give the education of wimmin high priority, and most schools throughout the Arab world are free. The rate of wimmin's enrollment at all levels of educational institutions is growing faster than that of men. In Jordan's main university, for example, female enrollment in the schools of science, Islamic law and nursing exceeds fifty percent. (TV Arab, p. 45) Wimmin are becoming not only teachers and nurses, but scientists, architects, biochemists, doctors, and pharmacists. In October 1980, Jordan began a new pharmacy program with fifty-three students: forty-eight of them wimmin. Fifty percent of Qatar's 34,000 students are female. More than half of its 2,500 teachers are wimmin. The editor-in-chief of "The Middle East" one of the most respected English news magazines serving European and Arab lands, is a womyn. While wimmin of all nations still encounter discrimination, the advancement of Arab wimmin has been remarkable. (TV Arab, p. 46) How realistic is it then, for Biafra to portray them as he has?

"...but they finally did outlaw slavery in 1962 so progress is being made..." Biafra's statement is an insinuation that the region has only recently been civilized. If he wants to look at a dispicable history marked by slavery, he has no further to look than his own backyard. How well were blacks treated in Amerika in 1962? How well are they treated today for that matter?!

The popular misconception of Arabs as slavers started in the 19th century with European explorers and missionaries. Prof. Sari Nasir of the University of Jordan, explains that European missionaries failed to gain converts to Christianity in Africa. The racist, Scottish missionary David Livingstone, suggested that, "the Arabs must be forced out of Africa and replaced by Christian missionaries in order to redeem the continent." Ironically, slavery and slave trade existed in Britain until the 19th century. (TV Arab, p. 16) Again, Jello may be best advised to focus his attention upon white, Western countries, who have had a long tradition of slave practices. Biafra's comment that "progress is being made" relates not only to the issue of slavery, but insinuates that the region is backward and uncivilized. This comment is an insult to all Arabs and those of Arabic descent and denies the immense contribution of Arabs to world history.

For his, and your, enlightenment, the Arabs gave the world a language and an alphabet. Between the 9th and 12th centuries, a number of Arab scholars wrote important documents on medicine, philosophy, history, religion, astronomy and geography. Hundreds of English words we use today are a sign of this legacy. Many of the original Arabic manuscripts were later translated and

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used in European schools. Arab surgeons in the Middle Ages authored books and medical encyclopedias that, in Latin translation, became the leading medical texts in European universities. Arab doctors made numerous breakthroughs in the areas of drugs and surgery and wrote extensively on diseases and treatments. They were pioneers in introducing the kind of teaching hospitals and travelling clinics which served as models for Western countries. Arabs were the first to establish hospitals with different wards for different diseases and to restrict the practice of medicine to medical college graduates with diplomas. In surgery, they were the first to perform a Caesarean section, the operation that saves the largest number of human lives. Arab physicians, who discovered the contagious nature of tuberculosis, recognized the highly infectious nature of the plague. They demonstrated that the disease could be transmitted by clothing and utensils as well as by personal contact. They were the first to diagnose stomach cancer, measles, smallpox, cholera, and bubonic plague. All this occurred hundreds of years before European bacteriological discoveries. (TV Arab, p. 9)

Arab scholars adapted Hindu numerals into the numbers system we still use in a modified form today, invented algebra, made revolutionary advances in geometry and trigonometry and taught the use of ciphers. In astronomy, Arabs established the use of latitude and longitude. They built the world's first observatory in western Iraq. They introduced the concept of centre of gravity and prescribed to the ancient Greek theory that the world was round before Columbus ultimately proved it. The greatest geographer of Africa was an Arab, Hassan al-Wazzan. His work appeared in many languages and for over 200 years served as the

most authoritative account of Africa. Another Arab, Yaqt Ibn Abdullah al-Hamawi, wrote a geographical dictionary considered to be a forerunner to the modern day encyclopedia. The clock is an Arab invention. Some of their time pieces moved by water, others by mercury or burning candles. The Arabs were pioneers in water works, a major preoccupation of people who live in arid or semi-arid lands. As technicians they built dams, used water wheels, dug wells, irrigation systems and underground canals. (TV Arab, pp. 10-11) I guess it was to all these things that Biafra was referring when he mentioned that, **"progress is being made"**.

He later relates the very real possibility that nuclear weapons could have been used in the war. But instead of reinforcing the importance and gravity of that statement with an attack on Amerika's history of such atrocities, he turns the tables on the people of the Mid-East oil-producing nations with, **"The Arab people will be so damn mad we'll be lucky to get out of there alive"**. So, supposedly we shouldn't drop nuclear weapons on people not because it is inhumane or insane, but because the charred survivors of such an attack **"will be so damn mad"**. I submit that if such weapons are used, there will be few revenge-seekers left in the Middle East. Unforgiveably, the victims are portrayed a potential aggressors in Biafra's twisted scenario, and he continues to peg them as an economic threat with, **"After that do you think any Arab country will sell us oil?"** I submit once again that there will be little oil left to extract from a radioactive wasteland. Biafra's imagery presents the familiar Hollywood scenario of a stereotypical Arab hostage-taker. In this case, oil is the ransom while Amerika conveniently plays the role of the innocent and unfortunate victim. This theme is reinforced when



"...wimmin can't go out alone or show their face or even drive...". Biafra's stereotypical portrayal of Arabic wimmin falls short of reality. Here we see Palestinian wimmin, sans veils, publicly protesting at Jenin refugee camp on International Women's Day.

Biafra comments that we **"...don't need to keep ourselves hostage to oil"**. Arabs are already stereotyped as terrorists, why perpetuate that falsehood with vague and threatening statements? Biafra may well have meant to imply that there is no need for us to be as dependent on that resource as we are, and I fully agree, but he should have stated it in those terms. Biafra's intentions aside, this clearly illustrates the importance in presenting a well-defined argument.

The final issue of contention I have is with the line, **"Stop selling guns to Arabs and to Israel"**. Israel is given an identity, while the term "Arabs" is used to indiscriminately refer to everyone living in the region supposedly. The first problem here is that it reinforces Israeli propaganda which places poor, solitary Israel in the centre of a pack of vicious, Arab jackals. Israel has tried to get this image of an outnumbered, defenceless underdog to stick, even while their aggression continues unabated. Biafra's statement also implies that the U.S. does an equal amount of arms business with Israel as it does with its Arab neighbours. This is hardly the case. U.S. military aid to Israel in 1991 had reached \$2.3

billion U.S. by May. Israel is the most powerful force in the region; a repressive apartheid state propped up with Yankee dollars and responsible for atrocities, human rights violations and terrorist acts against its own population and that of its neighbours. The fact that U.N. resolutions are acted upon when they apply against Arab countries and not when they apply to Israel is proof of the preferential treatment this illegal, fascist state receives. You want to see peace in the Middle East? Start enforcing U.N. resolutions that call for an end to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Start enforcing Resolution 425 which first called for the immediate Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon thirteen years ago. The final point I wish to make is to call attention to Biafra's continued reference to "Arabs" as if the regions peoples were a homogenous group of faceless inhabitants. The Middle East is a diverse blend of cultures, religions and people that deserve more respect than he has shown them. Through **Die For Oil Sucker**, Jello Biafra does not help to break down the myths that exist about Arabs, indeed, his only service is to strengthen and perpetuate them.

NVC SUN BURNING IN YOUR EYES

(i'd like to tell you a few things
about your country
that i'm sure will be hard to swallow
the truth
is often the most bitter medicine
but it can heal in a short time)

smile
VERY MUCH ENJOYING THIS

two young children cry
they possibly know
what i feel

THIS INSANITY
is neatly lined
starch-pressed vision salutations to you
my ruler

THIS DISARRAY
is drugged out

tele-vision many happy returns to us
our sacrificial lambs
(for the white man)

these children have gut level responses
gagged by gregarious generals gleeful schoolboy war toy
sufferation creator who gets the welcome sieg hiel.....

years have passed the nazis did succeed

breeze floating souvenir flags
which they charge us for
the symbol of freedom

costs

at least

a million lives or so.....

no resisters here today

we need their insight we need their horrible truths

we need their presence to prove that nowhere are these
megalomaniacs safe from our annoying slogans and songs and

speeches and banners and spray cans and community organizing

and networking and secret plans and they should be thinking

about this internal security threat voices posters meetings

blockades refusals riots pipe bombs molotov cocktails bricks

OUR DIVERSITY working on/against racism sexism homophobia in

our groups working against marxist domination sectarianism

authoritarianism infiltration paranoia i got a right to feel hostile

i gotta "right" to feel angry shut down lost

unfortunate fucked fooled a fool i gotta "right" to

mourn scream run hide sleep it away dream idealize if not i

give more power more spiritual power back to those guys in

that glass case thick glass case my stare will not penetrate

cannot connect and see their humanness make them feel guilty

bloody guilty i can envision a blood pouring on this parade

it would wash the cheers and smiles and bright eyes right

off everyone's face



in china a young man stood in front of a tank and said
"stop!"

here you won't even get near it
that is a necessary illusion that is built in
dissillusionment

this is an invasion parade
national victory celebration day

victory
for the rich

victory
for the realpolitik

victory
for the multinational corporations

victory
for the mainstream thought police

victory
for the life liberty happiness myth

victory
for colonialist massacres

victory
for white supremacy

victory
for the complicity of the majority of people in this country

victory
for the yellow ribbons

victory
for ineffectual prayer

victory
for peace movement divisions

lack of vision

my indecision

the blame on who?

no these men don't represent me

i return my ballots i damn your process

i laugh heartily next time

i general strike your ass is going to be burning big man not

this moderate approach support your dupes coerced into

thinking everything is gonna be allright

EVERYTHING WILL NOT BE ALLRIGHT

they brought all their equipment out today

i think its time i joined the air force

flight school training top gun movies sexism

smile-lie politely-read the Shadow in my bunk late at

night get an inkling about what it means to be a freedom

fighter who is actually a prisoner speak up boy i cannot

hear you didn't say anything uhhh didn't mean it don't trust

you gotta "right" not to you should not everyone here has a

gun at everybody else's back.

bill passed today-saying government now maintains the

posture to do whatever the fuck it wants and you cannot say

anything or else you WILL GO TO JAIL WITHOUT TRIAL NO FINES

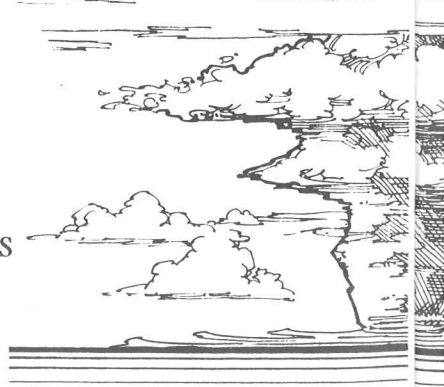
NO BAIL GOODBYE- passed overwhelming by whoever the fuck

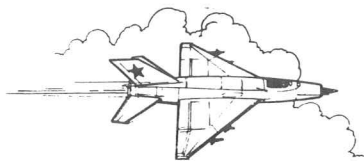
and it's time to use my training.

take off from the base in Maryland flying quite fast-in a

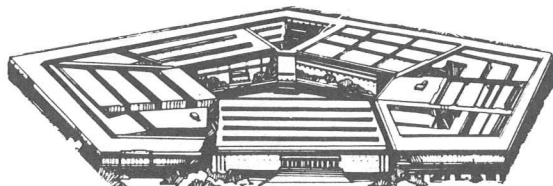
F-16 a beautiful panoramic view of Washington DC (oh look)

there's the white house i happened to have a few Tomahawk





missiles (where did they get that name?) stuck on to the wings here whooops i just let one go....there goes the White House, the Capitol building, the Pentagon....a lot less problems now....got many planes on my tail i fly to Cuba ditch it and watch the news in spanish which i cannot understand but the reporter seems to be happy. i'm surprised that our government leaders last as long as they do.....maybe it's because they support the gun lobby....



SMILE

put it on for us
the way to live in ignorance
is to disguise your question in an affirming manner
yes they mean no harm to you and i
they kill the bad guys.....

hey man WORRY

EVERY LITTLE THING IS NOT GOING TO BE ALLRIGHT

everything gets tougher crazier hungrier more afraid less
compassionate weaker sicker more willing to be prey less
willing to risk and when
when when when

i can not finish this diatribe ever

these parades they flaunt their brutality wave it in your face there is no peace movement present none at all we've all gone home tired cold beaten we've all decided to regroup renegotiate our strategies confirm our commitment our methods reactionary behaviour this parade they overload me with i flick it out of my eyes media sources stoop very low in these last hours of their babylon best of all

im curious

wonder how

we cede

power

you say it's easy

these soldiers and police

carry weapons

there is no peace in this heart in an environment such as this

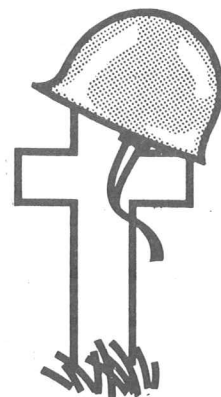
I WILL NEVER RELAX

a statement lined with a comprehension of what it would mean to be free of fear and coercion and war and toxic waste and rape and assault and drive-by shootings and crack and greed and we start with Ottawa and Washington our focal point

NOT EVER RELAXED

until from this tyranny we are free.....

—craig anderson—



NO TOLERANCE FOR

A New Label

HARDLINE

A New Movement



RECORDS

presents

A New Form of Fascism

by Paul Abrash

This is an article that I originally wrote for Joel Robinson's *Confused* zine. Due to some mix-up, Joel ran the first draft of the article, and not the finalized version you see before you. Thankfully, a poor screening technique blotted out the original draft that was printed in his publication. I wrote this when Hardline was just beginning to rear its ugly head, and while people seem to be waking up to this threat, I think continued opposition to their intolerance is necessary. So here it is. Thanx goes to Joel because I know that his intentions were the best.

Over the past several months, I've been reading alot of literature concerning the Intifada - the Palestinian uprising and struggle for a homeland. The examination of Israel as a fascist state has been a recurring theme in each of these texts. As the problem of controlling the Palestinians becomes more and more unmanageable, the Israeli response has been one of increasing oppressiveness, a desperate attempt to strengthen their failing grip on the occupied territories. Uri Davis, author of *Israel - An Apartheid State*, reached a conclusion that was essentially this:

Nation states are more or less vulnerable to embracing fascist ideology as a solution to internal strife.

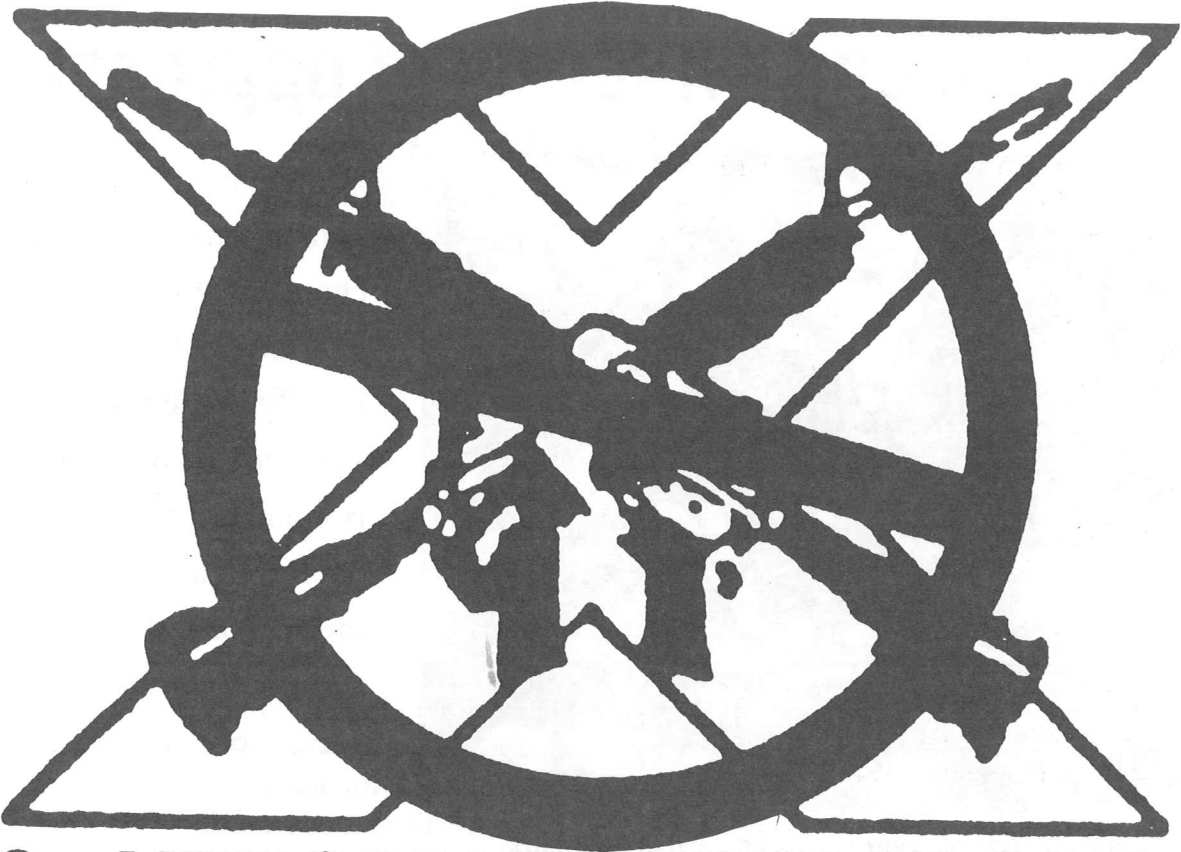
This hypothesis can also be applied to the hardcore scene. For the purpose of this column, substitute punk rockers for nation states, and emotional and intellectual immaturity for internal strife. Thus we achieve the equation: punk rockers are more or less vulnerable to embracing fascist ideology to compensate for their lack of emotional and intellectual maturity.

With that in mind, let's explore some facets of a recent punk rock trend, that being the Hardline movement. For those unfamiliar with this ugly mutation, a definition is in order. Hardline appears to be a dangerous hybrid of straight-edge fanaticism coupled with homophobia. It's disciples preach the usual straight-edge standards of sobriety, abstinence from

smoking, drugs and sex, as well as the more or less popular staight-edge ethic of veganism. What sets this particular group of intolerant lunk-heads apart however, is their stance with regard to one's sexuality. While straight edge frowns on casual sex and promiscuity, Hardline maintains that all sex is immoral. And though vaginal sex is met with disapproval, their reaction to homosexuality has been one of outright violence. Gay-bashing, traditionally a nazi cement-head practice, is eagerly adopted by these neo-fascist hate edgers, who see such action as a means of resolving their own retarded sexuality. And the danger is that such extremism is attractive to those already caught up in a similar lifestyle. Straight-edge, while certainly offering some "positive" and sensible values, has been received with such over-enthusiasm that militant supporters have turned it into a sort of new religion, demanding the strictest of dedication from its adherants. Straight-edge demands conformity. The fashion, music and strict rules of "membership" demonstrate this. It is quite likely that its followers will adhere to the law as it is layed down, and ammended, by its most prominent and vocal spokespeople, who may be termed the new priests. This was demonstrated a few years ago by the straight-edge mass embrace, more or less, of vegetarianism. This took place after Ian Mackaye, and others in the Dischord community, proclaimed vegetarianism as the next logical step of the straight philosophy. More recently, a great number of straight-edgers have embraced religion following Ray Cappel's new found "enlightenment" and conversion to Krishna. What the priests set by example, the flock blindly follow as law.

Having made that point, let me reiterate my concern that Hardline may be adopted by an ever-growing number of the straight-edge faction, and thus represents a threat to us all. The law according to Hardline dictates the standards of morality, and makes no bones about the required punishment for dissenters. In a letter to Mike Bullshit of the band GO!, Jason, from the Hardline band, Blindsight, (Scooby-Doo Records, and My Utopia zine), demonstrates the stupidity and violent potential of the "movement" he's caught up in. Quoting his band's lyrics, "Kill the murders, [sic] whores, junkies and queers - unproductive, destructive, meaningless fools, you serve no purpose, your life or death I do not care!" Jason goes on to

STRAIGHT EDGE



**& AUTOMATIC WEAPONS
DON'T MIX. JUST SAY NO TO DRUG
FREE YOUTH WITH GUNS.**

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY COMPASSION IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES
ACTION GROUP. THIS IS OBVIOUSLY SATIRE BY THE WAY.**

explain in his letter that "Homosexuality is a sickness. If you think it's incurable by any medicine or treatment, well, maybe the only cure is death? Or at least stomp you guys so much that you go back into hiding."

The pathetic ignorance and hypocrisy displayed in Jason's words does not require further commentary. Now that we know where they stand, we also know how to deal with them. Hardline is the name of a record label, so obviously all of the bands releasing material through them should be avoided. Their "for your enlightenment" ad offers three overpriced 7" releases (six bucks U.S. a pop), which should be fine material for the dustbin. They are: Vegan Reich "Hardline", Raid "Words Of War", and Statement "Prepare For Battle". Sounds like the whole Stars and Stripes/Patriot Records bullshit, doesn't it? And as if there were any doubts as to their militaristic tendencies, the Hardline logo features automatic

rifles crossed in the shape of an X. Cool, huh?

Fascism rears its ugly head in many forms. It may initially appear that the Hardline bunch are a positive and compassionate lot, after all, they support the animal liberation movement. Unfortunately, it's a different matter indeed when it comes to allowing humyn beings their freedom. It is impossible to tell how many bands have adopted the Hardline philosophy. Blindside, Vegan Reich, Raid and Statement we know of for sure. The key is awareness. Be critical of the bands you listen to (straight-edge or otherwise), and know what kind of politics it is you are supporting. I hope this treatise doesn't come off as a condemnation of straight-edge in general, my concern lies only with the fascistic Hardline movement. A boycott of Hardline bands, labels, and zines is a good way of putting some pressure to these nazis and will let them know that fascism will not be tolerated, regardless of the form it takes. Resistance.

We will not end one form of oppression until we end all forms of oppression



▲ Nazi submersion experiments on Jewish prisoners.

racism, n. 1. a belief that human races have distinctive characteristics that determine their respective cultures, usually involving the idea that one's own race is superior and has the right to rule others. 2. a policy of enforcing such asserted right. 3. a system of government and society based upon it.

Contemporary submersion experiments using dogs. ▼

speciesism, n. 1. a belief that different species of animals are significantly different from one another in their capacities to feel pleasure and pain and live an autonomous existence, usually involving the idea that one's own species has the right to rule and use others. 2. a policy of enforcing such asserted right. 3. a system of government and society based upon it.





Hopeful Monsters is a band from Mesa, Arizona. Vocalist, Jack Kahn who might best be known for his work with Hippy-Core, fronted the mighty Desecration until their demise. While Drastic Solutions generally doesn't do interviews through the mail, we make exceptions for bands who have meaningful things to say.

Who is in the band and what do they do....

John (Jo): My name is John and I play drums.

Eryc (E): Eryc, guitar and backing vocals.

Steve (S): Steve Sticks, bass.

Jack (J@): and this is Jack, lyrics and vocals.

S: Well if he gets to say lyrics then I get to say hips. Steve Sticks, hips.

Jack, you were pretty broken up with the split of Desecration. So much so that I remember you saying that you didn't want to be in another band because of the emotional strain. What made you change your mind....

J@: I'm not really sure what made me change my mind, I guess I just really missed being in a band. It was something that I really enjoyed doing. And it was always like a very powerful thing for me. Ever since Desecration broke up I was really bummed because whenever I would go to shows it would seem very awkward. If you've ever been in a band for a long time

and then you break up and you go to shows it's kind of weird because you're going "That was me performing..." and I just really missed it. I missed having that kind of co-operation with people and coming up with something that is a combination of everybody's positive points.

How come you started Hopeful Monsters....

J@: I think it kind of goes along the same thing. I mean, there are a lot of different ways to express yourself and I think that being in a band is one way that is good for me to express myself, lyrically and emotionally. At the time, it was really just me and our old guitar player, Jotham, that sort of had the idea for it....We were talking about it actually for months before we got something together.

Where did the name Hopeful Monsters come from....

S: Well it came from the original drummer of Hopeful Monsters, Audrey Creed. Is the book by Kurt Vonnegut?

E: Yeah.

J@: It's not called Hopeful Monsters.

S: The story was....all the corporations were just totally feeding off the earth. Just totally destroying it. Eventually acid rain had mutated all the creatures around in the world and then they had the offspring of creatures with "a thousand eyes, yellow eyes, one brain - a huge brain, animal fur and would possibly become better planetary citizens for the next generation" and that's basically the story.

E: It was just the point of destroying yourself to try and be a better self. Turning yourself into gruesome creatures not only physically but also mentally, to the point where production versus reproduction doesn't really count anymore.

J@: That's pretty good. Is that coming from you being stoned or would you say that normally. (Ed Note: Lots of laughter)

E: I go to college.

So the next part of that question is what does [Hopeful Monsters] mean to you....

E: That is exactly what it means to me.

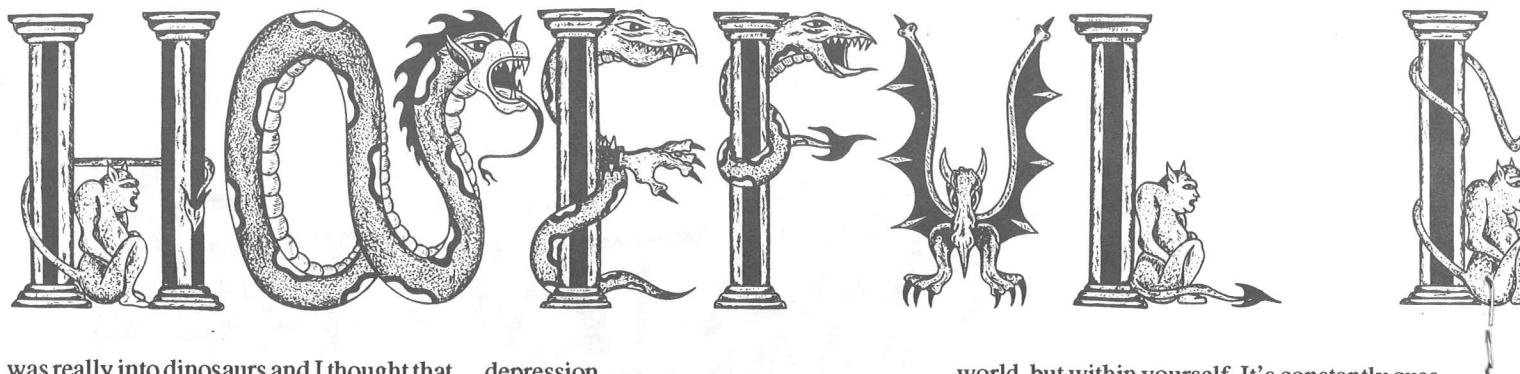
Anyone else....

S: I pretty much agree with Eryc. It's just....what you give in return you will get back. If you fuck up something it's going to eventually come back around.

E: What you sow, so shall you reap.

S: Yeah basically.

J@: I've always been really fascinated with monsters. Even when I was little, I



was really into dinosaurs and I thought that was the greatest thing.

E: The thing with monsters is that they can be so many different things.

J@: Yeah, but I was always into Godzilla, but anyways monsters are always thought of as deviations. With hopeful it's sort of like people who are deviating from the status quo, but hoping and trying to do something about changing the world, basically.

The song "Band-aids" seems to focus on the shortcomings of liberal solutions. What are other shortcomings in liberal thought....

Jo: This whole ass backward state of Arizona.

E: It's not even liberal. That's not even a bad example. It's more like, things like, lets put out pamphlets to show lower class people how to live in their lower class homes....

S: Force fed culture.

E: Yeah. It's the people who totally kidded themselves into believing that the system is totally fair for everybody and that it does work and that no one is left out. But I think the difference between liberals and conservatives,they both feel the exact same way except the conservatives aren't really kidding themselves that it's all because of a lifestyle....

J@: They are sort of more willing to admit it.

E:...because the conservatives know it hurts, but they don't care. The liberals are just kind of confused.

S: It's not in their vested interests.

E: Other shortcomings are like, things like, "Well you want to stop toxic waste, then vote", you know. They don't understand that today in this country, value isn't vested in the benefit of the majority of the people. It's completely vested in money and the basis of the economy and apparently it always has been, especially since the great

depression.

J@: ...and it's interesting because there is a good example like,.....if you don't have the lyrics to the song, I'll get the lyrics for you, but there is one part on it that we made a flyer out of. There is a part on the song that goes something like, "They say that band aids are flesh colour, but what colour is flesh." It's interesting because I talked to my friend Angie and she had pointed this out to me once, I had never really thought of this before. I have to credit her for this. We were talking about this and the subtle racism that goes on and you get like a thing of band-aids which says "Flesh colour to match your skin." Well it's not flesh colour, it's tan. You know, flesh ranges from like white to dark black. I mean there is no flesh colour. Basically what they mean is white anglo flesh colour, which is totally racist. It's a subtle racist thing.

Jo: ...and on the back of play-doh....

J@: There is a colour chart on the back and of course, how do you make flesh colour? Well flesh colour is my skin colour not Bo Jackson's flesh colour. The basic idea behind the song is that when there is problems and it doesn't have to be....

S: Some people may not know who Bo Jackson is ?

J@: Oh, Bo Jackson is a famous sports hero that happens to be black.

Jo: ...and he don't know Diddley.

J@: ...but anyways, it doesn't have to be in terms of politics or anything, just in terms of the way things are, in general. Like, if there is a problem,....today we were having an argument with a friend of ours and if there is a problem, you can't just keep saying "Well, we'll try this." You have to get o the root of the problem and change it totally. You have to be willing to accept the fact that change in itself is good. It's good to constantly try to change yourself and the environment and the world. To constantly question what's going on and that's where I see radical politics being....not just in the

world, but within yourself. It's constantly questioning what's going on and loving change. So that's basically what "Band-aids" is about. Did anybody else want to say anything to that ?

S: There are just so many subtle racist things all over it's amazing. If you actually look for it, it's amazing.

J@: Well it's a good issue to talk about too because it's the kind of thing where liberal thoughts and actions aren't going to end racism. It's something that's totally built into our system. It's built into the way we live. I mean racism must exist and it's not going to go away by people just being "Oh well, we'll have a 'I love the black culture' day at high school." I mean we should have that day every day in high school, in every school.

Jo:or it's like somebody saying, like the president, "I'll make a committee to take care of it," or "I'll do this or I'll do that". It never gets done.

E: It just makes people think they are doing something about it.

Jo: It kind of puts things on the back burner and lets everybody forget about it for a while until something racial goes on.....

What are some of the other topics that you sing about....

J@: Lets name some songs and say what they are about.

E: A lot of them are what some would say 'personal', but in the same sense when I think personal, I think of Uniform Choice's lyrics, like "I felt and I suffered and it was too late to do anything." Lyrics that don't make any fuckin' sense at all.

Jo: ...and there is probably really no emotion behind it. It's faked because everybody else is just generally doing it.

E: I think our lyrics are personal to the point where they are political, but not political in a party sense....

Jo: Political, like what happens to the people.

S: How does it affect you ? Where do these screw ups come from ?

E: Right, like the song "Lost", which is about anxiety attacks and not being able to explain the

MONSTERS

way you feel and everything which adversely affects your living situation, which adversely affects your politics. And that's not all, of course there are a few more obvious, directed at the authoritative system kind of political lyrics...

Do you want to mention any other songs?

Jo: I wanted to say that everybody can relate to them. I've let some of my metal friends listen to the songs on the 7" and they really don't know what's going on, what they are about and I give them lyrics and they read the lyrics and they can relate to it because almost everything we sing about is something that everybody can relate to.

J@: We have like a whole bunch of new songs and when I'm writing lyrics, I mean I guess I should probably say something because I write the lyrics, there are certain issues that are important to me that I try to talk about, but generally it's what's kind of happening in my mind at the time. You know we have songs that are about....well I just don't want to list them because when you sit there and go "Oh we have songs about feminism and racism and whatever it sounds so cliché. Its just like so what? I mean everyone does, but I think I try to put more into it then just like "Racism sucks" or whatever. I try to make it personal. You know like, for example we have a song called "I am not" and basically its a song about feminism, but its more about being a person, like being a man and seeing what other men do and act like assholes basically and then feeling like "Fuck, I'm not like that and I don't want wimmin to treat me like that because I don't act like that." Not that I, Jack Kahn, am perfect. I'm certainly not and I'm sure there is times where I act sexist or I act stupid, but I am at least trying to improve myself.

Jo: Your conscious of it and are getting put in the stereotype.

J@: Right like "Oh your just a guy. Guys are like that." And sometimes you can appreciate people being that angry about those kind of issues, but then again on a personal level I feel like "Hey don't discriminate against me because Joe and Steve and Mike are being authoritarian to you. I'm not being like that and give me a

chance as a person and then if I'm a dick you can be that way, but I'm not an asshole because I have a penis". So that's kind of what that's like. And I try to make the lyrics all kind of like that, like that dealing with larger issues in a personal way because I think people can relate to them and also because I like to make things more poetic and interesting rather than just like "Apartment Sucks", which it does, but that doesn't express my feelings towards it.

How did the split with Cringer come about....

S: When we were thinking about doing the 7", we were supposedly doing it with a band called Neanderthal and there was some miscommunication and we ended up not doing it with Neanderthal for who knows what reasons. So we sat in the back of Jack's backyard and thought about bands that we could do it with who would be really cool and who would be willing to put effort into a booklet and be totally supportive of everything that it's about. We were thinking up with the band Cringer. They are really nice people, they were totally supportive, they did put energy in to what the project was about and that's how basically that came about?

J@: Plus like Joel and I had been friends with them for a long time so it was pretty easy to get a hold of them and get the stuff.

Do you have anything else recorded? If so what do you plan to do with it....

Jo: We are working on an lp right now. We are going to record it in about a month and it will be out on Words of Warning Records in Wales and it might possibly get released on a split lp in Spain with a Spanish band.

J@: ...and after we get the lp out, I'd like to do a bunch of little projects, like a bunch of little 7"s.

S: Jack wants to do a whole bunch of Christmas songs and then change the lyrics...

J@: Oh yeah, I did want to do that actually.

I wanted to do a Hopeful Monsters Christmas lp. Like do like a bunch of Christmas songs, like rockin' hardcore versions of Christmas songs.

E: but I haven't been able to figure out "Oh tannin baum, Oh tannin' baum."

J@: ...but like change the lyrics so its totally blasphemous. I thought that would be kind of fun.

E: and sing 'em like King Diamond.

What are your impressions now that the war is over with Iraq....

E: My impression is that the conservative right is going to be undefeatable for the next ten years.

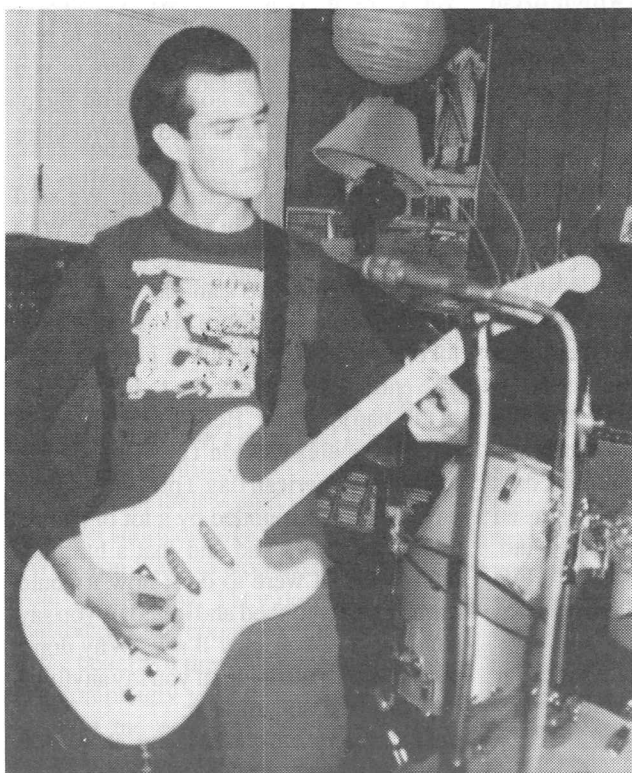
Jo: The government built up all this army. They didn't know if it worked. They didn't know anything about it so the first chance they get to test some of it out, they go "Oh Iraq messing with us." Russia goes in to Lithuania and those places and says "Look, you guys aren't leaving. We're going to keep you sovereign. We are going to pull you back in and you will stay here or you will die." We didn't go mess with them. Iraq does it to Kuwait and we are over there going "Hey back on your side."

E: ..and look who armed them. We sold them all this garbage in the first place. Who trained those pilots how to use those planes. I mean nothing we can say that hasn't already been said before about this whole joke, but this means this is going to last. The entire country is going to be swept up in this patriotic fear. Before the whole war thing I probably wouldn't have been afraid to burn an American flag. I probably would have gotten surrounded by a lot of people telling me that's bad and that's blasphemous, but if I were to do it now I would probably get mobbed and killed. If you say anything anti-war they'll say "Why don't you just move to Iraq" or if you say anything critical to the government.

J@: Actually why don't you share that experience we had at that protest.

“...The entire country is going to be swept up in this patriotic fear. Before the whole war thing I probably wouldn't have been afraid to burn an American flag. I probably would have gotten surrounded by a lot of people telling me that's bad and that's blasphemous, but if I were to do it now I would probably get mobbed and killed...”

Eric



E: We went to an anti-war demonstration shortly after the whole deadline. We sat there, you know, we had our signs and everything. We were ready to go out in front of the Capitol building.

J@: What was Joel's? Joel had a really cool sign.

E: Joel had a really cool sign that said "U.S. out of the Middle East" and on the back it said "By the way, U.S. out of North America". Me, Jack, our roommate Jeff and Lea Anne, and Joel went to this demonstration and we got our signs and we were all getting ready. We got out there and there was people sitting in a circle singing John Lennon songs, blowing bubbles, saying things like "We know Saddam is a madman, but still sanctions is a really good idea". We sat there seriously bored off our ass because there was really nothing objective about this at all. We thought that was bad, but then we looked across the plaza in front of the Capitol building and they had a pro-war demonstration and they had all these tables lined up. They had a big podium, they had a big banner with about three or four people standing around this thing and we were all kind of laughing. We thought it was kind of funny. They had all these t-shirts saying "Kick Saddam's ass", "Iraq Attack", "Baghdad this", and shit like that. We looked over there and we said "Great

what a lot of support the war is getting", then we looked down the street and realized that the whole thing was an actual march and we were standing at the place they were suppose to rally about five minutes before the marchers actually got there. We looked down the street and it was just filled with people waving American flags, yellow ribbons. It was like a ticker tape parade. People were dressed up in like camouflage, had their kids dressed up in camouflage. You see these things in like Ku Klux Klan rallies and stuff like that. I mean that was scary. We were standing there and they were marching towards us

and we didn't know they were coming towards us until like the last minute and they started flooding by us and then somehow they got the impression that we were anti-war demonstrators. We weren't doing anything and then suddenly made this circle. One guy with this mega phone comes out and starts shouting in me and Joel's face "Lefties go home." We just looked at each other feeling kind of insulted going "Lefties"??

J@: ...but it was also kind of funny too because there were people saying things that were so dumb, like "Why don't you get a high school education?" and we're like, "We're college graduates, what are you talking about?"

E: Looking at these people it was like "Oh, what did you do after you got your G. Ed. join the marines? And they formed a circle and they were sitting there shouting down our throats. It was so hard to believe that they were so emotional about this. I mean I didn't realize....

J@: ...and little kids generally giving us these dirty looks.

E: ...and so the guy with the mega phone. I go up to him, "Like look dude, if you want to talk to me you can put the thing down. You can talk rationally about it and he goes "It's easy for you to protest while people are over there dying for your freedom." So we start there and I say "Well how can you say this whole thing is about freedom?" I mean you talk about the free government in Kuwait. You know a place where they still have public beheadings (Ed Note: **They do not have public beheadings in Kuwait. See article entitled The Misuse of Information - this issue**). A place where wimmin have close to no rights. A place where the Sudanese and the Palestinians are completely persecuted. I mean it sounds a lot like downtown Washington, D.C. They were sitting there screaming at us and of course the point just doesn't get across, so we were ready to be mobbed by about a thousand people and this guy with a flat top and tank top grabs me and starts poking me in the chest really hard going "What the fuck do you know, you stupid little fuck. Don't you even have a fucking high school diploma." I'm like "Well yeah, I got a high school diploma. I'm also a college student. Of course I got a high school diploma." Then this cop just grabbed me and Joel and just pulled us out of there because they had

a feeling that this riot was going to start. It's so hard to believe that people who spend most of their days either staring in front of a tv screen or at themselves in the mirror or in the reflection in the hoods of their car, I mean these people have close to no education about anything and they are sitting there calling me stupid.

J@: Even when it was happening after a while, I felt like I was so tired of hearing about it all the time, but the thing that was totally disgusting was how patriotic and how ridiculous it was. Never once did you see any pictures of casualties or any idea of what was going on, it was just like sooo bad. It was just like "We won" and everybody was all happy about how we kicked ass and everything, but there was like thousands of people that were totally slaughtered. This war was such a media cover up. To see these fucking yellow ribbons on every car and it was just like you just can't believe it is here.

Jo: Well this country had an emotional and....

E: Well it's easy to get them stirred up when you condition them their whole life....

J@: Well it reminds me of those really bad World War II movies that are like a romance movie and they are like, "I'm going off to war now" and they're like "Oh I'll miss you." It's all romantic and how powerful and great this soldier is, but you know this is some fuckin' asshole that's going to go and slaughter teenage boys. I mean I don't see the romance in that at all.

E: ...but the funny thing is, if you've ever argued one on one with a pro-war person they will completely agree with you on all your subjects. Then when you ask them "Why do you support the war then?", they can't answer because it is just a completely emotional thing. Because they don't want to feel scared, they don't want to feel like everything is out of control. Or they will come out with such lame excuses like "We just had to stop Saddam Hussein." It's to the point where logic doesn't come into play because it's emotional furor.

What do you think can be done to prevent the U.S. from getting in or starting another war....

J@: Completely destroy it.

E: Even liberally, I think you could stop it because I seriously think it's all a matter of dealing with the small conservative party of people who have been running the country since World War II, starting with Dwight Eisenhower. Him, Nixon, Ford, all those Republicans....Like I said before, the con-



servatives, they know what they are doing is wrong they just don't care. I think with Bush being the head of C.I.A. for five years, he's got a lot of contacts, there's a lot of strings attached to him. I think it is just the entire Skull and Bones administration that have been ruling this country for so long. (Ed. note: Skull and Bones is the secret society at Yale which is more than just a ruling class fraternity. Fifteen people each year are chosen by the society which basically grants them a ticket for life in terms of placement, job security and being put in positions of control. It is called Skull and Bones because part of the initiation rite is that members are required to dig up the skull and bones of a famous revolutionary figure, someone who opposed the established order, and in so-doing insult the remains of anyone who stood up against privilege. George Bush was inducted into the society in his graduating year at Yale). I think if you

remove Bush, removed all his close advisors, removed certain heads of the C.I.A....

J@: I don't even know if that is going to do it, though because you know what I mean when I would talk to people about it people would be like "Well are you for the war?" and I could never really answer that question because my answer would be "I'm

against war". Like I don't have to answer that question because it doesn't matter what the reason for it is....

E: In truth, you are right about that and that can never be removed liberally....

J@:...but people will totally use it because no matter what, it is an option to settling affairs. It's like we can do x, y, or we can go to war and as long as that is always an option....

Jo: It comes down that way everywhere though. It's like the two baddest kids on the block. Sooner or later they are going to fight. They are going to be like, "Well I could just ignore him or we could fight and see who is the baddest." That's all it comes down to with countries. What! His dick is bigger than mine! Bomb him!

What do you think can be done to prevent the U.S. from getting in or starting another war?

J@: I don't know if there is anything that can be done at this point. We are so powerful and totally out of control.

S: We are totally irreparable right now. I think the only thing we can do now is for people like us opening their eyes to the blatant reality of it all.

J@: Yeah but opening their eyes isn't going to do anything.

E: Well yeah, that'll lead to the disinvestment of faith in government, in a monetary system, in power and without that investment. I mean the dollar only has so much value as somebody gives it.

J@: That's what it basically comes down to. The question isn't really what do you think can be done to prevent the U.S. from getting in another war it is how do you think you can change peoples' minds? Because if eighteen year old boys would

have said, "No. I'm not going to fight in the desert and shoot a bunch of kids. I'm not going to do that because it is wrong. I don't care what the reason for it is. It's wrong to do that and I don't care what the reason for it is."

E: ...but nobody did that. There was guys going "I'm going to kick those sand niggers asses."

J@: ...or yeah, you hear people like this kid Ron who was fifteen years old and his attitude really represents the typical American. He comes in here and he's like "Yeah, I wish I was seventeen so I could go over to Iraq and kill some commies." I'm like "Ron, there are no commies. We are not fighting any communists." He's like "Yeah but I'll go over there with my machine" and this kid is like three foot four, he weighs about twelve pounds and I'm like "Ron, you're not going to be kicking anybody's ass. Sorry, but no." But that's like the typical American attitude. Like we'll just go over there and kick some commie ass. We are not fighting any communists.

After all these years do you still consider yourself a part of the punk/ hardcore scene....

J@: Okay, we started talking about this yesterday and sometimes 'yes', but most of the time 'no.' A good example would be like I was telling you about one of our last shows we played and it was with Cringer and Citizen Fish and Jawbox, us, and Disturbed Businessmen and at first it was like really weird because it was huge. I mean there was like 500 or 600 people. I mean just punks like you've never seen before. None of them. Like you've never seen any of them. There was like people with twelve foot mohawks and shit...

S: ...which is really abnormal for this place.

J@: Right and I felt like...well maybe other people got a charge out of it, but I had sort of felt uncomfortable about it. Anyway, it was like almost before we had even started. Steve was like practically tuning his bass and people were like slam dancing to it. I mean it was like that bad. We were getting ready to do our first song and they were already slamming like crazy. But anyways, there was a bunch of skins and shit there that we hadn't seen and it was kind of uncomfortable, whatever and while we were playing they were like Seig Heiling

us and this and that and at this particular show we did like a sort of joke song to make fun of Lance. Well it was sort of serious sort of a joke to make fun of Lance from Cringer because he likes Iron Maiden a lot. We did like a rap version of "Run to the Hills" and at the end of it I said something like this is our anti-white race song and people sort of clapped and they thought that was kind of funny and then some skinhead jumped on stage and punched me couple of times and then everyone sort of grabbed him. I don't know really what happened. Eryc sort of through him over his back and karate chopped him. Jo: Everyone in the band, needless to say, nobody in the crowd....not even the bouncers attempted to stop this guy. Eryc pulled him off in a headlock.

J@: Anyways and we still went and we played our last song and we were just saying if you guys want to be stupid or whatever that's fine. But my whole thing was later and I never even really talked to anyone about this but I just felt totally betrayed by everyone and just by the scene and by everything because it was just like rock'n roll. Like the show must go on. Like the only band that even said anything about it as far as I was told was Cringer and even then....If I was in another band and that happened I wouldn't have even played until that situation was taken care of and I don't even know if I would have played at all. And I'm not putting my blame on anyone I just want to get my feelings out about this because it was like for me when I went to that show it was like going to a show five years ago. It was like nothing has changed at all. It was like all this effort and nothing has changed except all the kids are different. All the kids that I use to know cut there hair and got nine to five jobs and now they are just a bunch of more dumb fucking idiots that don't care about anyone. Well they're not all like that, but most of them are like that. In general, the show went on, rock'n roll went on and I just felt totally betrayed and totally down about everything. I felt like this was totally a waste of my time. I don't feel comfortable, I don't like doing this. I went home right after we had got done playing, I was really scared. I thought I was going to get killed. I mean all the skins were outside hanging out and I don't know if they were waiting or what they were doing. But a lot of times no I

don't feel like a part of that scene. For sure that is not my scene at all. My scene really is my group of friends that I hang around with. I mean that's the hardcore scene to me and I really do enjoy being in the band doing that, but I do not enjoy being in that atmosphere and I made it very clear. Eryc and I had a very long talk about this, that the shows that we do are worked out with the people that work there, but maybe Eryc can sort of elaborate on how the promoters aren't really willing to work with it.

E: Well the thing is the promoters fucking suck. They are like clientele. It is like six more bucks and as far as whoever gets hurt, they really don't seem to think it is their problem. I've been talking to the owners and I'm sure this isn't going to go through. I know I'm going to talk them into it and they are going to say they are totally into it and then when finally the chips are down they are going to totally flake out. We say that if we are going to play a show there will be no nazis allowed. No gangs, especially nazis. You know a nazi free zone. We would sit up front with the doorman and somebody comes by who is wearing a bomber jacket with a confederate flag, you know he's got red Doc Martens and suspenders, well no he's not going to come in. He's a nazi. If they are sitting there dressed up in nazi paraphernalia

J@: ...and the point is they don't come because they like the music. They don't like Hopeful Monsters. They don't like the other bands. They just come there to be dicks.

Jo: They come to slam.

E: Exactly, they come just to give people shit. See people cower. They get off on it. They love being feared and it's just going to show them that we are tired of your shit and your just not coming in. We don't need you in here. What you gotta do is convince the club owners that the kids coming in that are paying six bucks to watch the show. That's what they are coming there for, they are not going there for....

J@: ...but also it has to be on the bands' part too. I mean they have to just say "No sorry. We're not going on until this is taken care of and that's where I felt totally betrayed. Like all the bands "Well we've gotta play. You know there is these kids and they want to hear some good punk rock music." It might as well have been Quiet Riot and Def Leppard. It was like "Oh there

is a fight. Oh well, the show must go on." and that's totally how it was. There was a few people that did come up to me and say "Hey I'm really glad you said what you did" and "You were really brave" and I thought that was really cool and I'm sure that that was probably other people that felt that way. Maybe they felt intimidated or didn't want to say anything, but that's not what it really came down to. What it came down to was the band's responsibility as far as I'm concerned to say "We're not playing until these people are out of here."

S: There was people up in front of the stage so that people couldn't stage dive. They were sitting there so that people couldn't stage dive. Now if there are skins in the audience and somebody makes an anti-skin comment and one rushes the stage he isn't going up there to shake the guy's hand. I mean there is no reason to just let him up on stage.

E: Well the thing is, the bouncers are totally scared of him. These big tough guys....and the guy who came on stage wasn't very big at all. They are just scared....
Where do you see the hardcore scene going in the next few years...

E: Oh probably the same way it has been going. Bands will come in, they'll start to progress some of them will stick around for a long time some of them will get big and get signed and go rock'n roll some will just break up some will be like the ones you see in Maximum rock'n roll with the generic three syllable names like Cry of Disbelief or whatever. As long as the suburban rebellion continues you will always have people who like angry music and....

Do you think the hardcore scene can accomplish much in the next few years....

J@: I don't know what the hardcore scene is suppose to accomplish exactly.

E: I always thought of it as a more of a haven for people rather than

J@: ...I don't know if it really comes as anything. I think that within itself maybe sometimes it can accomplish stuff...

Jo:..but as far as a movement, I don't know.

J@: I don't know if there really is much of....I mean it seems to me that the more time goes on the less and less it seems like there really are definitions of what is this hardcore

E: Well it changes and fluctuates like everything else, but I mean...

J@: Well it seems to me like it is harder to define what the hardcore scene is now then what it was five years ago.

E: As dismal as this sounds I think it has already accomplished a lot just by teaching people things. Even among all these stupid kids with big mohawks and nothing but slam dancing on their minds, you will find a lot of people you can learn stuff from, become real good friends with. Where else can you run into somebody from England and totally be their friend forever just by meeting them or anybody else.

Jo: Like I've told these guys before about playing with your favourite band. I mean I would never be able to like get up on the same stage and play with my favourite band. They would be like get out here. You're not signed, you're nothing to me. You're just a fan who buys my album. In the scene all of you guys have gotten to play with Neurosis and Neurosis is one of your favourite bands. That is just unbelievable to me. You can play with your favourite band and talk to them. You are both human not like you are just a fan and I am the god. Like Steve said on the scene, things are made with the handshake. You can trust people. There is no back stabbing.

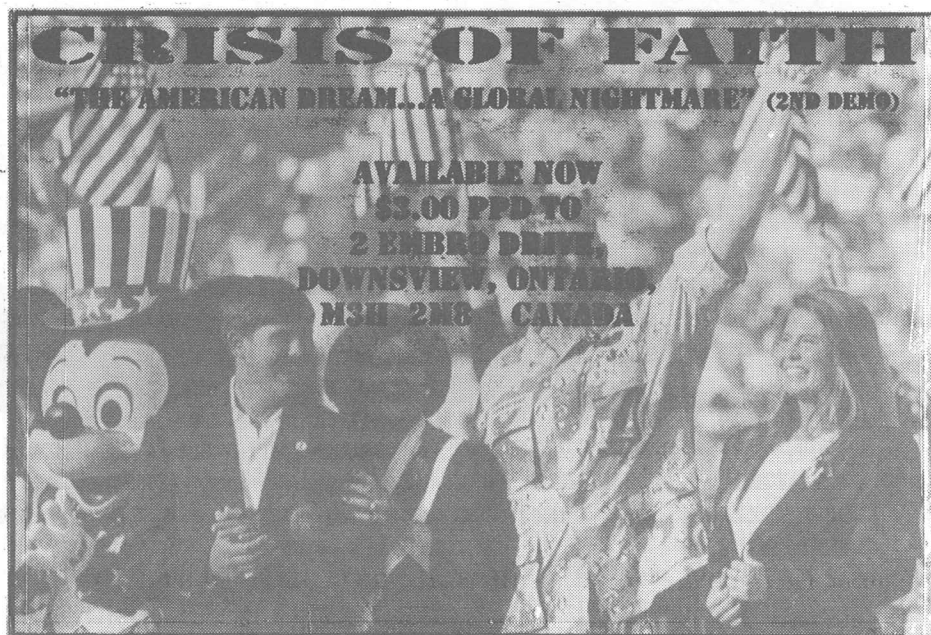
E: For the most part.

J@: I've got some stories about that. Shane from Manic Ears.

E: You can set up a show. Call up West Virginia. I mean just by talking over the phone you can like totally get to know somebody just because you have a common bond of music. That's just totally cool..

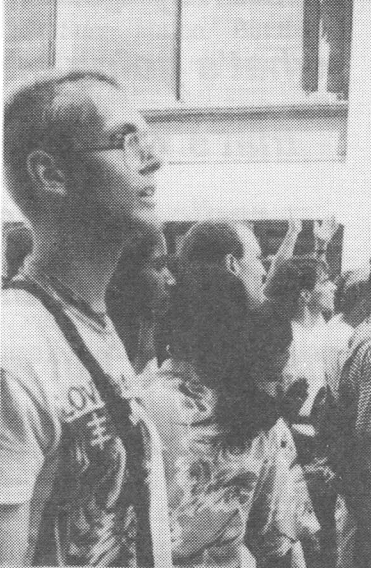
" You have to be willing to accept the fact that change in itself is good. It's good to constantly try to change yourself and the environment and the world. To constantly question what's going on and that's where I see radical politics being.....not just in the world, but within yourself."

Jack



"MIND THE GAP"

I was at a hardcore show, when a friend was telling me how he was feeling. He was coping with police brutality. (Meanwhile, the band was on stage singing about police oppression).



•What keeps you there?

•Did you consciously choose to be a part of it/them?

•Which community/communities do you identify with?

•What is community?



Is there a community in the hardcore scene?

MEND THE GAP

any responses, please write: Melanie
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This is an interview that took place following Moral Crux's show in Toronto on April 7, 1991. Now defunct, Moral Crux were James on vocals, Jody on drums, Jeff on guitar, and Justin on bass. (Roy their roadie sat in on the interview). In a time when political bands are a rarity, this band will be sorely missed.

How long have Moral Crux been together....

James: With this line up since 1986. Actually Jeff and I formed a band in '83 and we had a bass player and a drummer and we had practised for a long time and those were songs that flaked out so in '84/'85 we just made recorded tapes. Jeff just played all the instruments and I did the vocals and we were just looking for a permanent rhythm section and we found these guys and it's been going like this since '86.

Perhaps everybody should identify themselves for the tape....

James: James. Singer.

Jody: I'm Jody Kimmell, I'm the drum-

mer and cymbal player.

Justin: I'm Sideman and I play bass.

Jeff: I'm Jeff Jenkins and I play guitar.

Has the line up changed much....

James: No not at all.

What have you done in the way of releases....

James: The first lp came out in December of '87. It was 21 songs and it was self-titled Moral Crux. The next thing to come out was a Shredder compilation single with A Priori, Crimpshrine, Jawbreaker, and us. We had one song. Then around that year the album came out, Side Effects of Thinking, which has 15 songs. Then Newt

from Assault With Intent to Free released six out takes from the first lp session called Load of Dead Tracks and then also a fanzine called Yo! Menzer Wax from Spokane put out four new songs called Blood and Cordite in a 7" format. Also a new compilation just came out of Santa Rose on Kirbdog Records with No Means No and Victim's Family and we have like two songs.....

Jody: ...before the first album came out we had a couple of cassettes that came out too, like Hieroglyphics and Mockery was one of them and... Phobia Revolution, which was one that you guys did yourselves.

James: and then we had appeared on various tape compilations.

Does everyone contribute to the lyrics....

Jody: No, James does all the lyric writing and the rest of us do the music.

James: I write a lot of the music as well as Jeff and Justin.

What messages do you deal with in your songs and is there an underlying theme....

James: There are a lot of things. A lot of bands will take like one whole album and it will be about a certain topic, which I think is kind of mundane because I like to take each song and make it a different issue. I mean I'm sure there is some that overlap and kind of relate, but for the most part each song is somewhat different.

Except last night I think, unless I misheard, you did two songs dealing with the Palestinian issue. Is that correct....

James: Actually one....well two actually because in, "Revolutionize", there is a part in there about Israel. So actually there are two and then there are some that overlap that are about freedom fighters. **Would that be a common theme or is there a common theme.....**

James: Yeah there is a lot...I suppose there is quite a bit. I mean that is one of the bigger ones, I suppose, as well as all types of injustices. Gay rights, wimmins rights, any racial thing, social injustice.

What would your solution be, assuming that you could have some impact, for lasting peace in the Middle East....

James: Well the first thing would be that the Palestinians just have to have a homeland. I think that would like solve a large part of....

Jody: Yeah but everybody needs to have a homeland not just the Palestinians.

Well specifically with regards to the Middle East, you see the Palestinian homeland as being first and foremost....

James: Yeah I think that would be the first thing.

Where....in the occupied territories or...

James: Well I don't know....I suppose...perhaps yes. Maybe even a part of Israel. I mean they would have to both get together and decide something, but the main thing is that they have to have a homeland...I mean I think that would settle so much.

Do you think it would settle though or do you think that Zionists would want, I mean they want the occupied territories now. They are not even going to allow self determination let alone the estab-

lishment of a state called Palestine, so do you really think that that's conceivable....that a homeland would solve the issue or do you think that it would just be....

James: Well as far as being conceivable, I mean, I just think that the whole thing is if they could get a homeland that would be fantastic. As far as being conceivable that pretty much remains to be seen. That would just be an ideal solution...to have a homeland for the Palestinians.

How do you think America's role will be changing now that the Cold War is over....

James: Well I think now, as you've seen now since the Cold War is over you know we are supposed to have this big peace dividend which we never got. Now they are just fabricating more scenarios and situations for the military-industrial complex to make money because that's a big thing....I mean it employs a lot of people and stuff which is screwed as far as that, but....it just seems like that is one of the main things,...just like what happened in Panama and what not...fooling the people into this new post red scare.

So there is going to be an increase in U.S. imperialism....

James: That's what it seems like....like they are trying to sell us on this Star Wars thing again now since this Gulf thing. You know just stuff like that that you have to find some enemy. Like the monster of the month club attitude. Which is really stupid because if they just put a tenth or whatever into peaceful things, it would really make a difference.

Are you (James) the only vegetarian in the band

James: I am.

Jody: Our roadie is vegetarian.

When did you make a decision to become a vegetarian and why.....

James: I got that "Chicken Squawk" ep, and that was it. I had thought about it before....that was just a real big influence. I guess that was a lot of it. Plus because I've never drank or smoked or anything such as alcohol or any other drugs.

It wasn't a straight edge thing,...making a progression....

James: No because I'd been doing that....

Jody: He's been doing it before it was cool.

That's really interesting because I think it was probably M.D.C. that gave me a perspective.

James: Yeah. Them and like Crucifix.

Jody (To Paul): Are you like a vegetarian, too ?

Paul: Yeah.

James: You're vegan also.

Paul: Yeah.

Jody: How long have you been a vegan ?

Paul: I've been a vegan for about a month, but I've been a vegetarian for about five years.

Jody: How about you (To Stephe) ? Are you a vegan also ?

Stephe: I'm not vegan. I still eat a little bit of cheese, but I'm phasing that out.

James: It's hard.

Jody: It's really hard. I think more of us would be, would do it in the band if we knew how to cook, I think we're just too lazy.

Paul: Yeah well that can be a problem.

Jeff: I think that has a lot to do with it, you know. As soon as people can get over the self centeredness of eating meat, I think that's basically what it is. Once you can get over that, the rest is really easy, but they say it's really hard to do that.

I think veganism is just the natural transition. Have you thought about veganism (To James).....Is that a goal....Like I set that as a goal for myself....

James: No not really. I eat very few dairy products. Like outside of cheese I don't just drink milk. I mean I might eat it in a sauce. I eat eggs very rarely.

You do a song called "Rights".

Jody: "Right to Know" ?

I'm curious about the meaning of the song.

James: It's about all the cover ups that go on, you know be it the government or the media.

Does freedom of speech entitle you to write about anything you want....

Jody: Sure.

James: Well there is a responsibility that comes along with it. You know a lot of people believe they can say anything or I can....I mean you can't go into a theatre and yell "Fire !"

Stephe: ...because the New Right claims that they can do anything and they say, you know....they don't consider themselves 'the New Right', first off. They say

that they want to have the right to write about stuff, but it doesn't take into consideration other peoples' rights, so you sort of have the issue of freedom of speech versus other peoples' freedoms. Paul: and you have to understand that people are already in a privileged position to be able to write, in the first place.

Jody: There is a line that you have to draw.

James:well just by being a person with ethics and sensitivity. I mean I'm not opposed to someone writing whatever because everybody has the right to freedom of speech, but.....

Jody: You know like if somebody writes a review and say we suck shit, big deal, but to write and say.....

Let me just give you an idea. When Jello was on defense for that freedom of speech trial and he had come out of the case and won the case, he wasn't all so happy about it because he had said that I had also just won the right for Skrewdriver to say whatever they want to say.

James: Yeah well it's like the A.C.L.U. . It's kind of weird. Like I understand why they do support certain things, but it's kind of a

Jody: You know that's another one of those things that there is no right or wrong, there is a big grey area involved and it's like...people have the right to say what they want to say whether it's harmful to one person or...

Even if it denies people rights....

Jody: Well no, but how can you....see there is no way you can do that. If you are for free-

dom of speech, if you are for the first amendment, then that is part of the you know.....

There is no first amendment here (in Canada), but I know what you're saying.

James: It's about responsibility.....

Jody: It's the individual's responsibility to have the ethics to....

James: Well actually it's up to laws to curb peoples behaviour...because reality shows us not everyone respects others' rights.

Paul: ...but why should you extend freedom of speech to people like nazis who would, if they got power, would deny that freedom to others.

Stephe: ...and a second thing that I would like to add to that is that we are privileging freedom of speech over other peoples' rights, which are abstracts in the first

as possible. Unfortunately we don't live in a society that is that way because we are ruled more or less by an oligarchy, a power class, that basically decides what is right and what is wrong. The only thing that we can do is to react about situations the way we feel most comfortable with and the way that we feel is the right way to do it. That means if somebody else in power is going to do something that is going to compromise the rights and integrity of somebody

else. That is what they are doing and from the position that we are taking, we're trying to stand up against that through the lyrical content of our songs or just by talking to you like this. It's alright to be able to say we can control it to a point where we can say what's right and what's wrong through our songs. I mean who is to say who is going to be in power four years from now and hopefully the people are responsible enough when something happens to be able to stand up against it. That's just the chance you take. We live in a society that we as apathetic Americans, and I'm talking about the States, we have virtually let fewer and fewer people decide what's right for us and make up the rules. There are very few people that really care any more in the states, you know because they have their own little piece of comfort and that's the thing that you have to watch out for as you get older.....

Justin: Well I also think that there is a lack of enthusiasm with the younger generation. Our particular welfare system is so easily fucked over. It's like people work full time in the states at a minimum wage job and they make less money than

James

sitting at home on welfare. Something's kind of wrong there.

Well I don't think people are exactly living it up on welfare.

James: Yeah and if you want to talk about the biggest welfare fraud then you want to talk about the defense contractors.

I can't buy into that whole work ethic shit, though. I don't think that's what



"I just think that the whole thing is if they could get a homeland that would be fantastic. As far as being conceivable that pretty much remains to be seen. That would just be an ideal solution...to have a homeland for the Palestinians."

place. Not everyone has the freedom to speak so not everyone has the freedom to defend themselves.....

Jody: Yeah I can understand, but it's really hard to call. As far as I'm concerned....hopefully what you do in any ideal situation, where you can have a system of checks and balances over everything to keep it on as much as an even line

makes people apathetic - just because they're on welfare - because you're speaking to somebody who is on welfare and I don't think I'm apathetic.

Justin: ...but it contributes.

No. I don't see that it's any better slaving for some fucking boss who exploits your labour. It doesn't give you any sense of self worth. They try to sell us that shit.

James: A lot of people in the States who are on welfare have jobs and still....

I think there is problems with the system, but...

Justin: ...but I can't get on welfare and it pisses me off.

So you're bitter. Your a bitter welfare reject and you want to deny.....

Justin: I take a lot from food stamps, but....

Jody: (laughing) Listen to this guy.

Justin: No I know first hand what makes you lazy. When I have food stamps I eat better than I've ever eaten and I got fat and I just fucking loved it.

Roy: Yeah, but I think that if a job is out of the way you have more time and energy to put into

Justin:watching soap operas.

I found that when I was working, I got home from work and I'd just be so mentally and physically drained that I didn't want to do anything. Now I've got the whole day. We're not meant to be enslaved. Now I've got time to put into the bands, zine etc, etc....

Roy: ...and I found that even when I was working, when I wasn't at work I was thinking about it - how much I hated it and it just occupies all my time. Unfortunately its so hard to get any kind of assistance where we live that we have to work. Sure, I wouldn't be able to go on welfare.

Jody: Next question.

Well I want to bring it back to the original question, which was freedom of speech versus just general freedoms. Let me present this to you guys. Don't you think that freedom of speech is a farce if not all of us have access to these avenues.

James: Yeah definitely.

So you think that kind of situation exists?

James: Oh yeah.

...or am I just giving you some kind of a hypothetical situation.

James: Are you talking about the States. I'm talking about everywhere, gener-

ally.

Jody: Oh yeah. Just the fact that we do have censorship shows that we don't have the freedom. The first amendment is just some fuckin' sittin' silent piece of old parchment. You know that's basically what it is. You've got to fuckin' realize that the media is feeding us crap - what they want us to see - even CNN....

Roy: Coming from a media establishment, it's not so much what the media doesn't want the public to see, it's the fact that the media will not go out and get their own story. They rely on too many government agencies to give them the information. There is no investigative reporting anymore because things are so fast. They are more concerned about getting the story first on tv that they won't delve into it.

...but these all sound like problematic things of the system, where you've got a capitalist system that is selling information and is selling their advertising space based on whether they are the fastest at distributing information. I still don't think that minority groups have equal access to the media and so freedom of speech is still an abstract.

James: Well a lot of those rights are. Wimin, blacks, Asians, I mean those are the people who the constitution is not fully implemented. It still isn't to this day.

So with freedom of speech....should we even be worrying about that. We should be talking about....I don't know because I think there are some more fundamental freedoms that still have to be dealt with before we can start talking about freedom of speech.

Jody: Well yeah. Getting people housing, getting the people whose children are going to bed hungry fed. Start worrying about more social problems....

Freedom of speech has become more of a red herring....

Jody: Yeah I think its a flag thing that they're throwing just to keep major issues covered up.

...we can all totally rally behind freedom of speech because it is all something that we want, but it doesn't exist and the thing is that it's pit us against issues concerned with racism. It also targets groups as uptight interest groups that are abusing power when really all they are trying to do is say "Hey, we're being oppressed".

James: I think the most important thing in society is a free press. If you don't have that you don't have to have a totalitarian state. If you just control the media, that's all you have to do.

What I'm saying is the free press is a farce, if all the citizens don't have access to it. But I wanted to know what you guys thought because I've been living this. At the newspaper that I work at, they printed a racist piece and I was one of the few people who stood up against it and after a thousand people signed a petition and still the issues weren't being addressed. They were just covering their ass saying this is freedom of speech, they weren't so concerned about the freedoms of the offended.

James: Well it's like if a black person commits a crime it will always say, you know....

....but its happening at every level. It's not just with a university newspaper, there is also another fanzine around town where one of the columnists wrote an extremely racist piece and was making these sweeping generalizations and stereotypes and I wrote a letter to him and the guy wrote back and he turned it into the whole freedom of speech thing. They pegged me the censor and they were standing up for the constitution and everything else and we played the bad guys in it and it is a debate that is still not resolved.

Jody: Well people can take things and twist them.

James: Well actually, if you look at it that's totally unconstitutional, anyway.

Stephe: Well it's 1991, when are the fuckin' rights and freedoms going to be recognized for everybody.

Paul: Yeah and there was no freedom because the people that he was attacking had no voice to respond to what he was saying and I thought it was especially despicable because you expect it from mainstream media, but you'd like to think that alternative press is offering an alternative, right, and not just spouting the same old racist crap. But anyway we're interviewing ourselves here.

Tell us a little bit about what your scene is like where you're from....

James: It's not really a large scene. I mean there are people there that are into the

music and what not, but Ephrata, where we live, is pretty small. There are probably like 30 people who are pretty into it and pretty close knit. We mostly play on the east side like Spokane or on the west side like Seattle. The Spokane scene is a lot better than the Seattle scene. I mean they've always been good about keeping an all ages club open, having lots of shows and lots of bands coming through....

I heard that Spokane had like a large skinhead population, is that true....

James: No, not at all.

Jody: They are like the 14-16 year old kids who look on it as a trend to try, you know there is not any real skins, which is really ironic because Hayden Lake, which is probably 50 miles from Spokane, Hayden Lake is where that Richard Butler has that Aryan nation camp. It's like a boot camp. They have nazi rallies up there.

James: They got busted not too long ago for attempting to bomb this gay disco in Seattle and they got caught.

So how far are you guys from Spokane....

James: About 120 miles.

And that's the closest big city. So there is no other bands from the city or....

James: Well there is this other area like Tri cities about 90 miles away. I mean there is occasionally shows out there and bands from that area.

Jody: Actually the town that we live in, Moses Lake, well James lives in Ephrata, which is 20 miles away from Moses Lake. Ephrata is maybe one third or one quarter the size of Moses Lake and Moses Lake has a population of 20,000. It's really small.

So how do you do it? How do you get it together....

Jody: Frustration. We played with all the other musicians in town and it was inevitable that we would play together.

Justin: Me and Jody were in this awful metal cover band and then broke up. We were kind of figuring out what we were going to do because we liked playing together, bass and drums, just good friends. He had already jammed with these guys a couple of times and knew they needed a bass player and a drummer so we went over there.

Jody: We use to practise from 5 in the afternoon until like 5 in the morning. All night long sessions in "The Ranch". This place right outside of Ephrata, it's called

"The Ranch". It had no windows, there were flies everywhere. We put ourselves through hell for the first two years. We would practise solid. Set up little four track recording studios. A couple of times we got good deals on a couple of different four track recorders....but anyway it was out of frustration because there is nothing to do there and no one to do it, except us.

Why the name Moral Crux? What does it mean.....

James: I just wanted a name that wouldn't be already taken....You know when you pick a name and you find out that someone has got the same name, so I was just looking through the dictionary trying to find a name and I was trying to find some obscure word. That was one thought. I don't know. I think it's pretty self explanatory.

Has it taken on any sort of special significance....

James: Yeah. I think it does like all the time. As far as what's going on throughout the globe. Crux is a critical puzzling point and Moral deals with right and wrong.....Moral Crux of something.....

Puzzling arena of values, which is kind of like hardcore.

"We live in a society that we as apathetic Americans, and I'm talking about the States, we have virtually let fewer and fewer people decide what's right for us and make up the rules."

Jody

Moral crux (r.i.p.)

1. Hieroglyphics and Mockery demo
2. Phobia Revolution demo
3. Moral Crux - 21 song lp
4. V/A "Shredder" comp. ep
5. Side Effects of Thinking lp
6. Load of dead Tracks ep
7. Blood and Cordite ep
8. V/A "Sasquatch"



BAD RELIGION

Stephen and I had many reservations about running this interview, which is a transcript of the one we did for *Camera-core* video fanzine #2. We felt that this would be a good opportunity to confront the band about some of their more questionable practices. After re-reading the interview, I felt that we had not pursued some of their comments far enough. For instance, we did not confront them about the high door price, nor their \$20.00+ t-shirts. We also allowed such ego-inflated comments as "we're waving the subculture's banner" to slip by unchecked. Though I enjoy Bad Religion's music immensely, it does not justify overly inflated door prices, t-shirts, stickers or egos. I also think that if a band has nothing to hide, they shouldn't feel intimidated or offended when an interviewer questions their integrity. With that in mind, please read on...

What's the name Bad Religion and where did it come from.....

Bobby: The idea was when they were 15 years old you want to piss your parents off and so they thought of the dumbest thing that they could. They came up with Bad Religion.

Brett: Bobby was only 11 at the time.

That's how the Nunfuckers did it too.

Greg: What you've got to understand, the

reason we passed it over to Bobby is because over the last 11 years we've answered that question so often, and it's been written in so many rags...not implying that this is a rag....that you could find out the answer if you really tried. We're tired of answering it, but Bobby did beautifully.

Jay: What you need to add onto that Bobby is that it was the best one of all the choices. It was better than the other ones because then what you do is they go "What were the other ones?" and you go "I don't know."

Brett: You know it's a good name because you can read a lot into it, and we can sit here and say, well it meant this and it meant that and throw you a lot of bullshit lines, but at the time it sounded good and we grew with the name. And the name grew with us and it gave us a lot of ideas for songs and things like that.

Greg: Yeah it is a thought provoking name for kids at 15 and now adults at 26 and 27 and 19.

Brett: So that's why we liked it.

What were you doing for so many years in between the release of the second EP and Suffer.....

Brett: That was only three years you realize.

Still actually compared to like when you guys came out with record after record after record, three years seems like an anomaly in comparison.

Brett: Some people accuse us of charting out music but there was a year between every release which I think is the right amount of time between records 'cause if I buy a record by an artist and I love it, I'll wear it out in a year. Not physically wear it out but I'll be ready for something new.

But within the underground scene it's somewhat... it's fairly quick.

Brett: Well maybe underground artists aren't as prolific or maybe they have... either that or maybe they have other responsibilities.

How did the MRR comp. come about with Noam Chomsky..... How did that come together.....

Greg: It was a gift. We gave them two songs, and it's because of a conversation Brett was having with them.

Brett: I'll try to make this as brief and succinct as possible. The war started and me and Greg had written those songs independently of each other. Without discussing the single we had written them for a forthcoming LP. I was having a conversation with Tim Yohannan of Maximum Rock and Roll and he said why don't you guys put out a 7"; some kind of protest 7". I said "Well you know I happen to have a song already, let me give Greg a call and see if he wants to write one." Greg said "I already have a song," so I called Tim back and I said "I'll tell you what, we've got the

songs how about if I record it and give it to Maximum Rock and Roll and you release it and let all the proceeds go to a non-profit humanitarian organization." He thought it was a great idea. I'll tell you one reason for me doing it that way. In L.A. there's a fanzine called Flipside who recently accused us of being opportunists, which we're not.

Opportunists, because of when the 7" came out.....

Brett: No, before that. Accused us of being rock stars or jacking up door prices or ticket prices. You know, whatever it is that they're upset about.

Didn't Flipside put you on a comp., the L.A. Power comp.....

Greg: Yeah. They decided many things about us, some good, some bad.

Brett: As a group gets bigger and bigger, people in the subculture tend to question their integrity. It just happens that way automatically and I didn't want people to think that Bad Religion would capitalize on a war. Well here's a way for us to get publicity, here's a way for us to make some bucks. So rather than put it out ourselves I gave it to Maximum Rock'nRoll. Nobody questions their integrity at all. They're so politically correct to a "T". I thought well, I'll donate the songs to you and you guys do it and then there won't be any accusations. It was just easier.

Along those lines though shouldn't the subculture continually question a band's integrity? Do you feel threatened by having your motives questioned.....

Brett: Yes. Why?

Brett: Because we're waving the subculture's banner. We come from that. That's what we are. We haven't changed one thing. We're still doing it ourselves. We

still do everything ourselves.

Greg: The main motivation for the subculture questioning is the fact that popularity...

Brett: ...because we're more popular.

Greg: In other words, we want people to like



our music and when I started getting interested in this kind of music and this kind of subculture I thought it was a great thing. I didn't look at it as only a select few people who could be in it. I wish that the whole world was more open minded and enjoyed it and so if that crowd grows it's all the better as far as I'm concerned.

Brett: ...but the word subculture becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy when bands become rejected only by the virtue of the fact that they're gaining popularity.

Do you think it's necessarily that they're rejected by virtue of the fact that they're getting popular or that getting popular goes hand in hand with

major label record deals...

Brett: but we're not on a major label. I'm just saying that that's an example of that.

Brett: That's a pattern.

....and any movement that loses the ability to question itself collapses.

Brett: Absolutely, and that is the pattern, but see, on the flipside of that, us and Fugazi are perhaps the only bands in history that have achieved the success in terms of...

Greg: numbers of people.

Brett: Yeah numbers of people who know about us. We're perhaps the two bands in history that have achieved that level without being on a major label, without working for a major corporation.

Greg: ...or without compromising our integrity.

Brett: I think that we should be lauded for that, not chastised for that.

Ok, along those lines then, do you know that tonight's show is sponsored by MCA...

Jay: Yeah.

Brett: I didn't know that.

Is it not a compromise...

Greg: What's MCA?

MCA is a major label record company which was one of the major contributors and sponsors of Ronald Reagan's campaign.....

Greg: Well I don't think Ronald Reagan would be too happy that they're doing that either.

Well that's not really the point.

Greg: I don't know, it is the point. It shows you that the major corporations can do a lot of things and get their fingers in a lot of places without any of the main players knowing what's going on.



"...we're waving the subculture's banner. We come from that. That's what we are. We haven't changed one thing. We're still doing it ourselves. We still do everything ourselves."

Mr. Brett

How can you not know about it....

Brett: We're involved in almost every aspect. We write our music, we record our music, we manufacture it, we sell it. We're not booking agents, it's the one aspect that we haven't done. Doing the things that we do right now is virtually a full time job. I don't have time to do anything else and so we have a booking agent book shows for us.

Ok, but isn't that sort of giving up a little bit of the D.I.Y. ethic then because you're not doing it yourself anymore... once again this is going hand in hand with this popularity thing. Once you get to a certain level of success you've got to give up a certain amount of the do it yourself ethic. You've got to give up control....

Greg: I think you're right about that but what it comes down to is we're artists and as long as the art isn't compromised and the integrity of the art still stands that's the least you can do. The most you can do is do everything yourself and you'd drive yourself crazy and you'd compromise the art. The art would start to sink too.

Brett: Perhaps, that might be true.

I don't think that's necessarily so.

Greg: Well it's true with me, I mean every artist is different and that's definitely true with me.

Brett: Unfortunately it's not a black and white world and so what we've had to do is settle for the lesser of two evils.

I realize there's going to have to be compromise and obviously you can't know everything, but everything is a matter of degree right? And so can you still say if you're singing against capitalism or against corporations, can you still do that and essentially play for MCA, that's my only question....

Brett: No, if we had a song against capitalism we probably couldn't but we don't. "The Land of Competition". Is that just about L.A. or is it about...

Brett: That's not about an economic system that's much more socio-political. I'm not in favour of American-style capitalism, however, I don't have any song that I think would keep us from playing here tonight.

Greg: The other interesting thing I find is what does MCA have to gain from sponsoring a show like this. I mean here... 'cause really you're saying we're playing for MCA. I mean that's pretty strong words and pretty strong accusation because if MCA knew anything about Bad Religion they would probably wash their hands of it completely.

Not if there was a buck involved... but

it's an MCA sponsored event and I think what they have to gain is that they can control the area of art as well by getting involved with...

Jay: ..but can they, can they control what key I'm going to play in...

They can sort of sponsor it for a while and then pull out their money or something....

Jay: Yeah, but I mean you have to understand that in L.A. that happens every year. Every year someone comes along, they build up a club, everybody gets to play there, everybody thinks it's great. A little culture evolves around this one club... Boom it's gone. All of a sudden everybody's Friday night place to go and see their favourite band is gone and it's gone for a long time, and another one starts up again.

Brett: There are no absolutes. You probably pay your taxes don't you?

Jay: They have different taxation up here.

Brett: Well whatever, but you pay your taxes right?

Sure.

Brett: Well why do you do that, doesn't the government do horrible things with the money that you don't agree with?

Well that's a bit of a different situation you know. You have to pay your taxes essentially if you don't want to go to jail but you don't have to play for MCA...

Greg: No you don't have to pay your taxes...

I'm saying change things that you can, that you have possible control over. I'm just upset about this corporate intrusion into our music so that it's a situation where they get to dictate the clubs, the shows, everything so that my little band doesn't have a place to play and could never play the Opera House, basically.

Jay: Why not? I got the bands on the bill tonight. Not MAD. I didn't know who MAD was and I talked to all my friends here and they said "We've never heard of them." I said "Alright who's the band that you think should bill?" and everyone said, "Drunken Anger." I said "Fine." I called up the guy at the club and I said "This is the band that I want on the bill, Drunken Anger," and it was that simple. They're not telling me like this is what's going to happen, you guys be here at this time, this is the band you're playing with. We tell them what we want. Don't ever misconstrue the idea that these guys are calling us

saying, you're going to be here at 7:30 and you're going to be playing for 45 minutes and you're not going to play that fucking "Damned To Be Free" song and you're not going to do any encores. They don't do that, they can't do that.

Well we don't think it's ... I mean we're not saying anything like that....

Jay: And so I mean I called him and told him what bands were going to be on the bill, and I had no idea who these guys were, and it doesn't matter. To me it's like he (Greg) said before, you compromise. You say look... right now we've got 13 people a day calling us saying please come and play our city. Ok, well why should I come and play your city versus another guy's city. I don't want to get anybody against anybody so we said look lets just have somebody do this for us because we don't have the time to do this. Maybe as things slow down a bit we can get back into it and maybe say,

look you're our friend, you do it, instead of us hiring a guy that's someone else's friend we hire somebody that we know and go OK we only play with these people and we only play in this city. I mean you can't make everybody happy all the time.

Brett: You know the point I was trying to make is, about paying my taxes. I pay my taxes 'cause I don't want to go to jail, but I'm totally against it. But like I said, I could do more good by paying my taxes within my community, trying to do some local good in my community, than I would from being in jail. Now I know this is like a real extreme analogy but what I'm getting at is that sometimes to change the system you have to work within the system.

I disagree.

Greg: Well we could have a discussion and disagree.

So then you wouldn't have a problem with going onto a major label because conceivably you'd have an even wider audience....

Jay: That's totally different...

But that's totally along the line of what you're saying.

Brett: It's along the lines but we draw the line somewhere, you know what I'm saying?

So where are you drawing the line....

Jay: He says that to change the system sometimes you can change it from working within the system. We are Epitaph records. We do the distribution and all that stuff. We're changing that from within. You know, we're telling these people we don't want to do long-boxes anymore, we want everything in jewel-boxes. Buy everything from us in jewel-boxes or at least 50%. If that's not changing something. We're telling them what we would like them to buy.

Brett: Basically the company Epitaph Records pays federal and state business tax and they use that money to build this fuckin' stealth bombers, you know what I'm say-

"...What it comes down to is we're artists and as long as the art isn't compromised and the integrity of the art still stands that's the least you can do. The most you can do is do everything yourself and you'd drive yourself crazy and you'd compromise the art."

Greg

ing?

But at the same time you're not a subsidiary of a larger corporation.

Brett: No and we won't be. But if we play a show here tonight and if I'd known MCA was sponsoring it I would have tried to get a different show together. Most of the places we're playing aren't like this. We played a rehearsal studio in Buffalo four days ago. We came in here and we go whoa, look at this place. It was shocking. However we're not going to say now that I know about this we're not going to play because what will happen, we have to choose the lesser of two evils.

Well obviously... that's not realistic. It's just that when we heard that MCA was sponsoring your show we all said "Wow!" We were taken aback as well.

Brett: We weren't responsible for that. That's something that happened. You know, we played the Rivoli last time. We came up here, we thought, well we're playing in a bigger place this time 'cause we thought the Rivoli was too small. We didn't know it was sponsored by some major conglomerate.

Well we're sort of flogging this to death I guess. How did the Buffalo show come together, I heard that it was a studio that you guys record at but what's the deal.

Greg: The rumour worked.

Jay: What was the rumour?

Greg: Don't you remember? It was one of the first things that I said when we got on stage that night. I said "Welcome to our rehearsal studio," sort of thing.

Jay: I remember now. So it was an actual rehearsal studio... basically the promoter paid \$200 for us to go in there and play a show.

Was it a recording studio or was it a jam space....

Jay: It was a rehearsal studio.

Brett: It wasn't like it was a place where they do shows it was a rehearsal room where everyone all ages could come in.

Greg: They pretended like they knew what they were doing, like they were running the show. They were trying to make it legitimate but it was just a...

Bobby: It was fun.

Brett: It was a good show.

Something I've wondered is how do you write the songs, what's the formula or whatever, or is there such a thing....

Greg: No there is no such thing. Everybody in the band who writes a song writes the lyrics and the music.

Brett: I have a technique for writing songs, though.

Yeah that's what I'm masking. You (Greg) were saying you don't live in California....

Greg: No, upstate New York.

It must make practicing difficult...

Jay: We don't practice.

You don't practice??!

Jay: The band practices every now and then.

Greg: We've been together for 11 years man, we have a sound and we know what everybody plays.

Brett: I find that if you rehearse a lot it just gets stale you know. Good stuff happens when you don't practice and you go on and you play and it's just like really fresh.

So what you mail tapes of the music back and forth....

Jay: It's how we did the single. We recorded it like that on 24 track. Sent the 24 tracks to him (Greg) and he recorded his vocals and on the other one he recorded the vocals and basic beat tracks and sent it

back and we did the music around it.

And so you do any preparation before you go on tour, like get together and practice for a couple of weeks.....

Jay: As a band without him yeah we do. Since our drummer left we did actually get some rehearsing in.

Greg: We have one or two shows usually that are a week or so before our tour. For

"I'm not in favour of American-style capitalism, however I don't have any song that I think would keep us from playing here tonight."

Mr. Brett

those one or two shows we will maybe have one or two rehearsals.

Brett: We do a long sound-check or something.

Greg: ...and then we're fresh for our show playing. We just kick off the tour.

Brett: You have to understand that we have about 70 songs and we've been playing them for about 11 years, if we start rehearsing all the time we're just going to hate those fuckin' songs and not want to play them. But when we don't play them and we get together and play it's exhilarating, it's exciting. I can't imagine rehearsing something over and over it would be like taking piano lessons it's like a chore. I like playing the songs and I don't need to rehearse them. If I make a little mistake who cares. I usually won't and maybe I'll do something improvisational whereas if I rehearse something the same way every time it might be perfect but it probably won't rock as hard.

Greg: You might as well play in an opera house.

The lyrics to Operation Rescue seem somewhat ambiguous, at least to me.

Greg: Probably because you aren't familiar with Operation Rescue.

Well I know that they're the pro-life movement that goes and blockades abortion clinics and blows them up occasionally.

Greg: And it still seems pretty vague?

Yeah so we've been having this discussion back and forth trying to figure out the words and we assume it's an attack against Operation Rescue, a critique of some sort.

Brett: Good assumption.

But the words are sort of misleading.

Greg: What part specifically?

"The ones we've needed all these years to stop the heinous wrongdoings and verify our moral benevolence as a people.

Greg: It's facetious. That's what you call going overboard to make a point of the opposite. It's like poetic licence. In other words isn't it ludicrous, that's what's absurd to think

that these are the people that we've needed.

Brett:that these militant right-wingers we need to justify

our benevolence as a people. These war mongering murderers who have no feeling for humanity at all.

Just looking for clarification. I figured that much, but you never know.

Jay: Well you'd be hard stretched to find any right-wing sentiment in our music.

How do you keep up the distribution as an independent at such high volume....

Brett: We work our fucking asses off, every day. At least 16 hours a day.

Greg Hetson: See look. He doesn't have an ass. Before he started working for Epitaph he had the biggest ass. Bigger than Greg's. Now he's got no ass.

Brett: See Greg's gotta start working for Epitaph. We just work really hard at it, that's how we do it. We only have three people, Me, Jay, and one other guy.

I hear you guys are going to go up to 100,000. You're expecting to sell over 100,000....

Brett: Sales yeah, well shipped we'll see if we get returns...

Jay: It depends if this MCA thing...

What do you guys have for future plans recording wise, tour wise.

Brett: We've just recorded our new album before leaving on tour. No title yet.

Greg: We have to think of one in the next few days because it's a common question.

Brett: I was thinking of calling it "The Generator."

Greg: It's too Yes. Yes had an album called "Big Generator."

Brett: Yeah but Eddie Money had an album called "No Control." What does that have to do with it?

Greg:...but Eddie Money is a lot more

punk than Yes....Anyways that is just one of our plans. The record.

Tour wise. Is this going to be a North American tour...

Greg: Tomorrow we go to Berlin.

Brett: Future plans? Well I intend to continue writing songs so I guess we'll continue to put out records and play.

What about school, is that getting in the way....

Greg: Well it has been for the last six years.

Greg Hetson: We've gotten around it pretty well.

Brett: Well as far as me I'm going to continue working for Epitaph and signing local bands.

Is anything coming out on Epitaph....

Brett: I signed a group called Coffin Break. They were on CZ and they left amicably. It was the first record on Epitaph that I didn't produce or co-produce and it's produced by Jack of Subpop note, and it's a really good record. There's a group called Pennywise coming out from Ferosa Beach.

Yeah we know Pennywise.

Brett: Really you've heard of them?

I'm not a fan but I sold him (Paul) my single.

Brett: Pennywise is coming out. Those are the two immediate releases. Oh and I don't know if you're familiar with a group called Down By Law. Their record just came out on Epitaph a few weeks ago and a friend of mine Dave Smalley is their singer. He used to be in Dag Nasty. As a result of that record and Dave living in California and doing Down By Law for Epitaph, he contacted all the original members of Dag Nasty and they all kind of wanted to record something and he asked...

Brian Baker....

Brett: Technically we can't use that person's name so I won't say that he's on the record at all. Well because Brian Baker is on Geffen records for Junkyard you know so he can't record for me. But there is a guitarist using a pseudo name on the record. They recorded a record but I don't know when we can finish it. But that Dag Nasty reunion album will be coming out on Epitaph.

As Dag Nasty....

Brett: Yes they want to call it Dag Nasty but there's some people being nasty about it so maybe we'll use a completely differ-

ent name. So there's some interesting stuff coming out.

Last year when you were in town, this is sort of just to clear the air. There were some allegations made about stolen band equipment with regards to Bad Religion.

Brett: We stole it?

Yeah, there was allegations made by the opening bands.

Brett: Really? What kind of equipment?

It was drum equipment so I don't think it really applies.

Brett: We don't steal. We've never stolen anything.

Jay: We've had a lot of shit ripped off. I go to people and go hey guy you forgot your pedal; you lost your tuner; here's your two foot patch cord. I wouldn't take anything from anybody. That's the worst karma anyways. Taking a guitar cord from some other band means that your amp will blow up in the next show.

Except it was the drummers actually who were saying it.

Greg: Let's just tell you something, as you get more and more popular it's very easy to become targets of a lot of things.

Jay: Look I remember the show at the Rivoli.

I know the guys who are making the allegations and they are not petty. They wouldn't do something stupid like that.

Greg: It's easier to say that we stole it than it is to say that some local band stole it. You know why? Because it's such an appalling thing that Bad Religion would steal from an opening band...

Plus you're not here. The whole point is that you weren't here to answer all of these charges so this is the chance that you get to respond to all of this. It's a

rumour that's been going around for a year now.

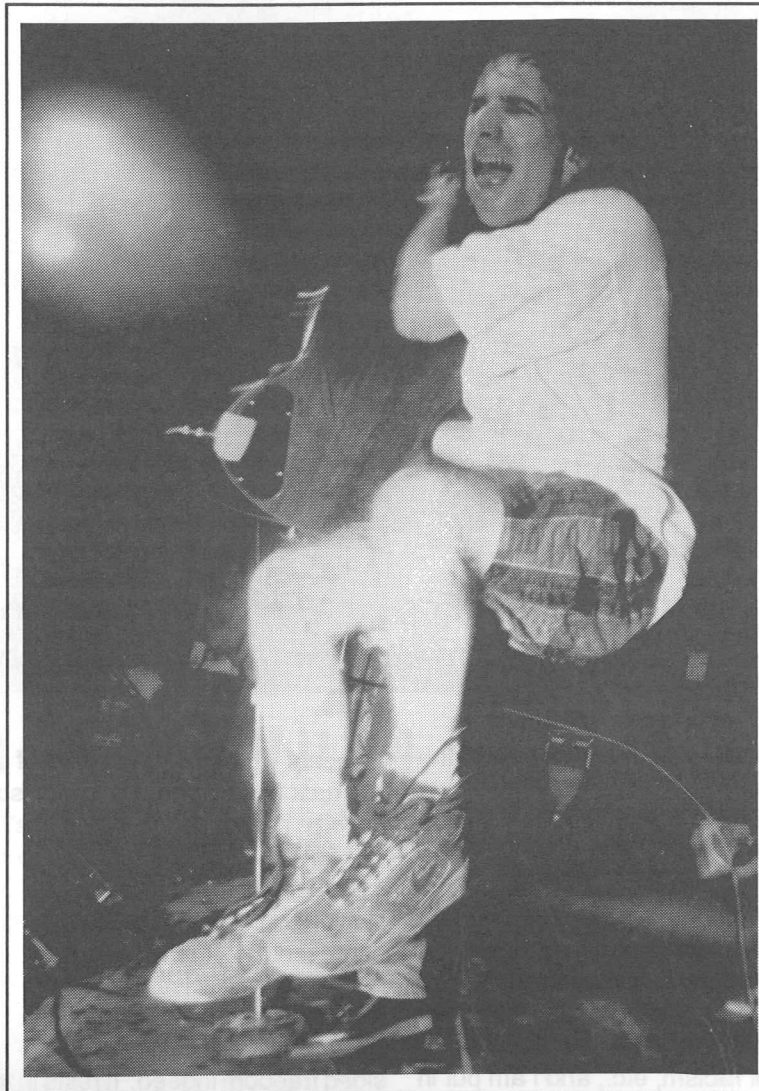
Jay: The only answer is that's not true at all.

Brett: We categorically deny it. Unequivocally deny it.

Greg: Never, never, never...

Jay: Were you at the show?

No.



Jay: Do you know the size of the Rivoli? It was packed from one end to the other and I'm not talking about just to the stage, I'm talking about all the way in the dressing room and all the way out the hall. So there were probably 40 people backstage that weren't in any band.

Brett: Exactly what got stolen, what piece of equipment?

Well from one of the bands a drum pedal got stolen and from another band it was

the cymbals.

Brett: A kick pedal and cymbals?

Jay: How could we go to Europe after that and go Pete how come you've got eight cymbals, now man that's a lot of cymbals.

Brett: What could a drummer do with two kick pedals on tour?

Well they break kind of easily.

Brett: Well they didn't break that night though.

Well we're not accusing you of that.

Brett: What band is that?

It was the opening bands from last year. I don't want to start naming names.

Brett: Why don't you, they did.

Well one of them was Kingpin and one of them was Phleg Camp.

Jay: Kingpin? Kingpin sends us demo tapes all the time.

Next time they write you, you can write 'em back and say "Oh gosh you're fuckin drunk." Well they also got rid of their drummer.

Brett: What else is there? Allegation wise?

Greg: Yeah, let's hear the allegations.

Jay: We've been here once, let's hear what we did while we were here for the last eight hours.

Greg Hetson: You know what's good though, if you think about it logistically we're the last band to load out, if anybody was going to steal anything they'd see you walking out with it.

Jay: OK next allegation.

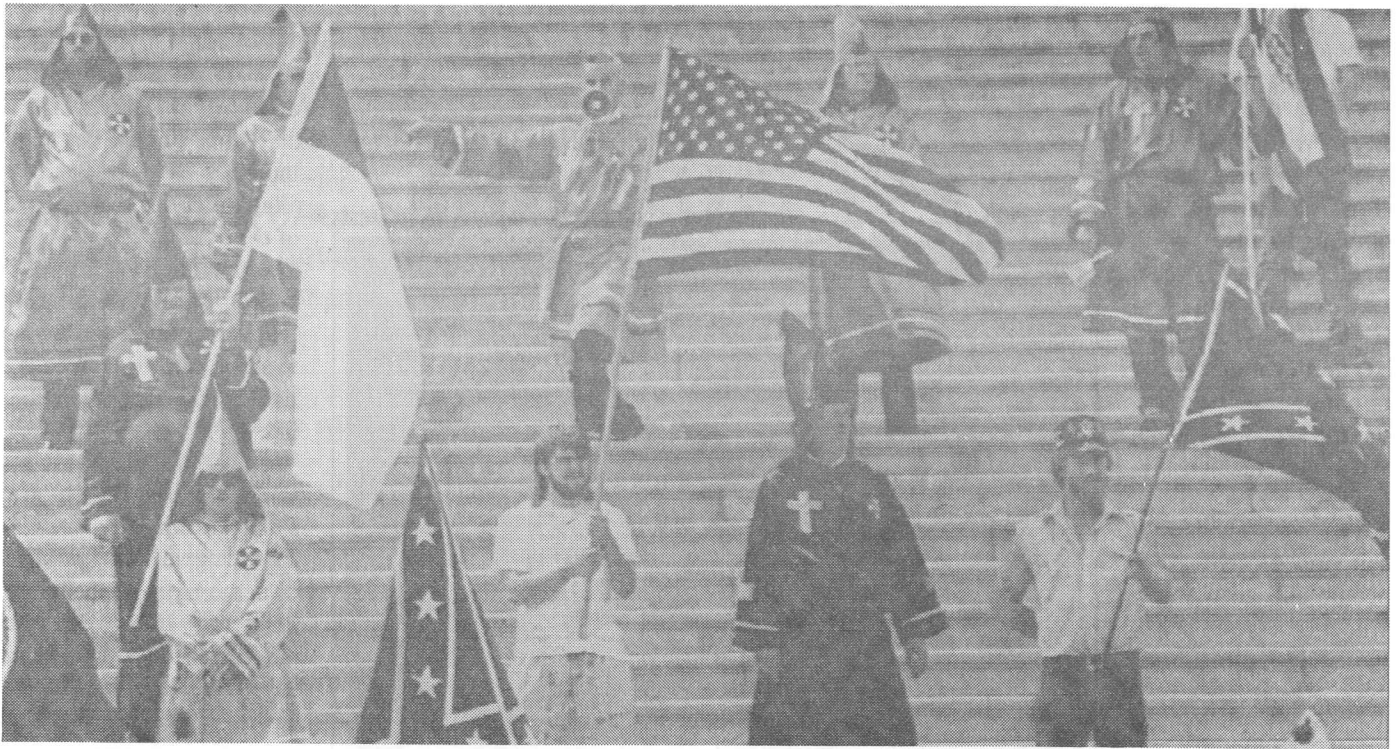
Well can we start another rumour tonight and we'll see how it develops by next year....

Jay: Let's start an experiment, what will it be this year?

Brett: That Bad Religion is signing a deal with MCA. Is there anyone outside? I'll start the rumour right now. (shouts out the window) Bad Religion is signing a major record deal with MCA.

By the time you get back to California somebody is going to ask you about this.

Paul Gets...the Final Word



...is it just me or is there something wrong? When the KKK on march is proof of our freedom and a wish to change the world is seen as a threat...

SECTION 46

Well, this is the column that always seems to get me in the most trouble, so let's get at it...

A lot of people have been yapping about censorship lately so I thought that this might be a good time to put in my two cents. And that's precisely what seems to be the problem. There are certain people/publications/bands in the hardcore scene who feel that they are somehow above questioning. If I encounter racist or sexist behavior and confront it, I am suddenly labelled a member of the 'thought police' or accused of playing the censor. In this way, attention is diverted from the real issue of racism, etc., and I am put in the position of having to defend myself against such ridiculous labelling practices.

Why the fuck can't I oppose racism? Is allowing the spread of hate really an exercise of freedom? Is it a free society where lies and hate and ignorance are bred and allowed to propagate without opposition? I hope not. First of all, if we're living in a free society, then I have the right to speak out against these 'isms'. (And without being labelled a censor in the process). It is not censorship merely to oppose and speak out against something you disagree with. And this 'thought police' term that is all the rage, is merely an attempt by conservatives to portray themselves as

innocent victims of somekind of a liberal witch hunt. What the fuck has happened to our scene when we can't even criticize and question ourselves?

The second point I'd like to make about our so-called 'free' society is that the concept of freedom of speech is an illusion. Freedom of speech does not exist unless everyone has access to the means by which information is promulgated. And that clearly is not the case. So those people who are the victims of your so-called freedom of speech are the same ones who lack a voice to respond. It is a very one-sided freedom indeed. It rests in the hands of the privileged, and until you recognize that reality, you'll never understand the 'freedom' you so righteously proclaim.

The final word is that you, as punk rock consumers (cause that's what it's come down to) have to be very careful of what it is you are supporting because once you plunk down your money for something, you are supporting the ideas contained within that zine, record, etc. So ask yourself: Do I really want to support racism? Do these thoughts reflect my own? And if the answer is no, then exercise your freedom of speech and oppose and expose that shit for what it is. Question everything, and don't be intimidated by their stupid labelling tactics.



ALCAN ALUMINUM

This was the picture used by ALCAN as an ad campaign to clean up their image. It was used to promote a recycling program in Ontario, known as the Blue Box Program; However they didn't tell you how ineffective the program is? Environmentalists call the program a 'license to pollute', as it has done very little towards actual garbage reduction while making consumers feel like things are getting better. In fact, the expenses of running the program has not only prevented Ontario from additional areas of waste reduction that could make significant contributions to our ecological crisis, but also excluded other countries from starting a similar program based on the exorbitant start up costs. Furthermore, they don't tell you how they were the brains behind the Blue Box Program. ALCAN lobbied for it as far back as 1982 and the program allowed them to break into the highly profitable pop industry. Finally after the program was set up, responsibility for recycling shifted from the corporations that produce the packaging onto individuals like you and me. The shift in onus, developed a classic case of blaming the victim allowing ALCAN to save face.

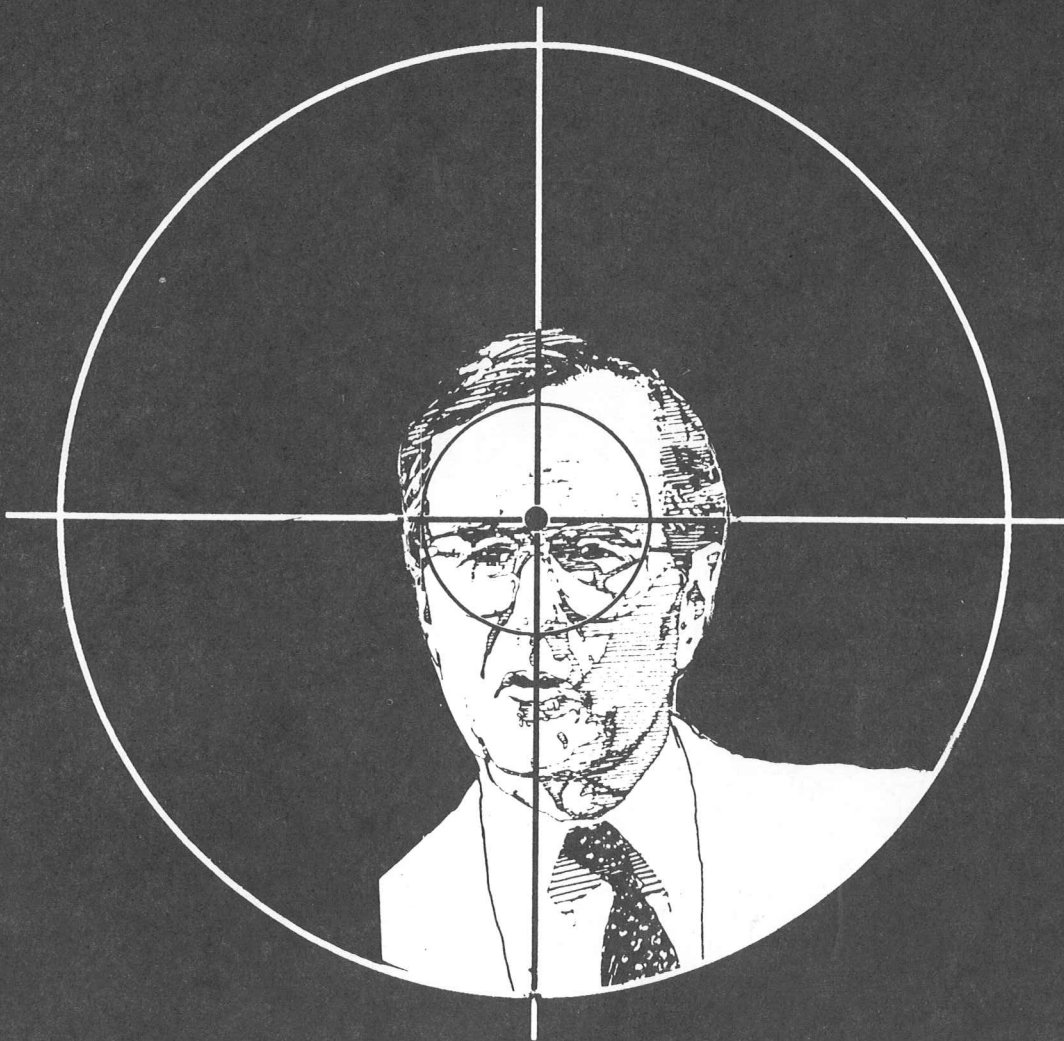
ALCAN has had to do a lot in order to disguise their atrocious environmental record. Did you know that ALCAN was largely responsible for bringing the beluga whale to the brink of extinction? With twenty four different contaminants and levels of PCB's so high that under Canadian law their corpses should have been treated as hazardous waste, ALCAN became infamous for the beluga whale disaster. In fact, the same contaminants were responsible for a form of bladder cancer that was fatal to ALCAN's workers. Many of ALCAN's workers and residents from the Saguenay River area were stricken with the disease that eventually killed them. And now there is damning evidence that links aluminum toxicity with Alzheimer's disease. Aluminum is not such a precious metal that it is irreplaceable. So how much longer can we afford to use aluminum?



ALCAN DESTROYS THE ENVIRONMENT

SEND TO:

**POLITICALLY CORRECT ?
HELL NO, JUST POLITICALLY DIRECT.
LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO THE
POLITICALLY (PATRIOTICALLY) CORRECT.**



**OUR MESSAGE TO YOU IS KEEP YOUR
HANDS OFF OUR CULTURE.**

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